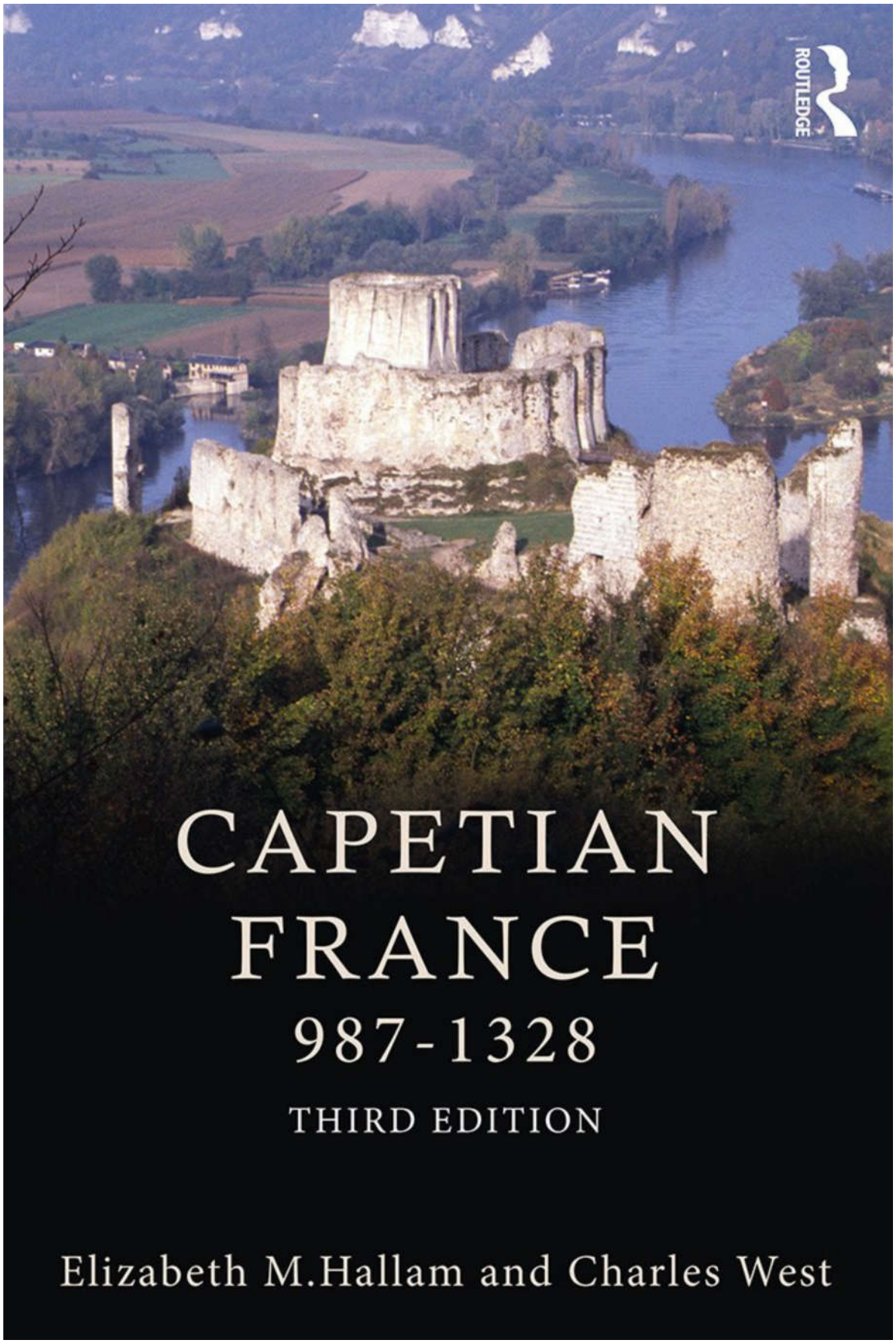

CAPETIAN FRANCE

987-1328

THIRD EDITION

Elizabeth M.Hallam and Charles West

CAPETIAN FRANCE 987–1328

Capetian France 987–1328 is an authoritative overview of the country's development across four centuries, with a focus on changes to the political, religious, social and cultural climate during this period.

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Elizabeth M. Hallam and Charles West

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PREFACE

In the two decades since the publication of the second edition of *Capetian France 987–1328*, scholarly work on France from the late-tenth to the mid-fourteenth centuries has continued to flourish in France and the rest of western Europe, in north America and Australasia. In revising and updating the text we have drawn extensively on this recent work.

Since 2000, some important overviews of medieval France have appeared in English, including the Oxford History of France series.[1] The New Cambridge Medieval History series continues to be of value. Dunbabin has reprinted her authoritative survey, *France in the Making*, with a new preface, and Bradbury has published a useful political history of the kings and kingdom. Important biographies of major figures have also appeared, including Bradbury on Philip Augustus, Grant on Blanche of Castile, Gollrad's translation of Le Goff on Louis IX, Bates on William the Conqueror and Evergates on Henry the Liberal. These, and the wealth of more detailed scholarly work on the Capetians in English, are noted in the bibliography and footnotes below. So too is the bedrock of flourishing Capetian scholarship published in French, which is a prerequisite for a more detailed study of this pivotal era.

In their perceptive overview of recent scholarship on the later Capetian years from 1180 to 1328, Sean Field and Cecilia Gaposchkin suggest that the traditional political and institutional approach to the growth of royal power – as exemplified by Robert Fawtier and Joseph Strayer – although challenged, has not been undermined or overtaken by the later twentieth-century's strong scholarly emphasis on social and cultural history. It has rather been revived, strengthened and enriched: Capetian power is today seen through the prism of 'ideology, art, sanctity, gender, crusade, persecution, and intellectual authority', allowing a more sophisticated model of political and institutional history to emerge.[2]

Scholarly work on the years from 987 to 1180 is likewise drawing on this rich mix of themes. While continuing to focus on social and political developments across the French regions, it is discerning a shared political culture giving the embattled west Frankish kingdom a somewhat greater element of stability than had previously been recognised. Increasingly too, without minimising the centripetal and often violent tendencies of the princes, counts and castellans, the key role of the church – the bishops and reforming monastic orders – is being acknowledged in providing a structure for society and fostering peace and social order.

All these themes have been reflected in this updated version. In particular, by including vignettes on a diverse range of primary sources and incorporating within the text some images of buildings, objects and manuscripts, we have sought to connect the reader more directly with the material past in the hope that they will want to find out more. While this book was being prepared for publication a terrible fire shockingly engulfed much of Notre-Dame-de-Paris in April 2019. Worldwide reactions bear witness to the huge value placed on France's Capetian heritage.

As in its previous editions, *Capetian France 987–1328* still aims to meet the need for a clear and comprehensive account of French history from 987 to 1328 for the non-French reader. At the very least, readers who have not benefited from a French education should find it useful in providing general background. We hope, too, to provide a jumping-off point for further investigation of Capetian France, whether through research and reading, or better still through visiting this most fascinating of countries to experience its medieval past at first hand.

Notes

1 M. Bull, ed., *France in the Central Middle Ages 900–1200* (Oxford 2002); D. Potter, ed., *France in the Later Middle Ages, 1200–1500* (Oxford, 2003). D. Power, ed., *The Central Middle Ages, Europe 950–1300* (Oxford, 2006) also has some valuable material.

2 S. L. Field and M. C. Gaposchkin, 'Questioning the Capetians, 1180–1328', *History Compass*, 12 (2014), 567–85.

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Elizabeth M. Hallam. My particular thanks go to Judith Everard for her invaluable work on the second edition of this book, published in 2001, and now to Charles West for taking up the baton, updating Chapters 1–3 and making a hugely significant and creative contribution to this third edition as a whole. Each has drawn on their own research and has greatly enriched the text as a result.

I would also like to thank Chris Jones and Lindy Grant for their invaluable advice and input on Chapters 4–6, and the history department at the University of East Anglia for inviting me to present my new work on Louis IX to the medieval research seminar and for such helpful feedback. Colleagues in the Architecture and Heritage Team at the Houses of Parliament have endured my anecdotes in a most supportive way, as have my family and friends.

As well as being highly informative, my attendance at the British Archaeological Association's Conference in Paris in the summer of 2016 was enormously inspiring – as was singing with the Parliament Choir in Notre-Dame-de-Paris earlier that year. And a particular tribute goes to the staff at the British Library's reading rooms where I have carried out the great bulk of my research for this revised text: I have found the service there to be first-rate.

Charles West. I am very grateful to Fraser McNair and David Bates for their careful reading of Chapters 1–3, and helpful suggestions for their improvement (though any errors that remain are certainly mine). I am also grateful to Emma Hunter for putting up with the arrival of the early Capetians into our household. Most of all, however, I would like to thank Elizabeth M. Hallam for her patience and her excellent advice, and for making the editing and revising process not merely painless but positively enjoyable.

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FRENCH SOCIETY IN THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES

Introduction

The origins of West Francia

From the later Middle Ages onwards the idea that France had 'natural limits' was widely held. The identification of the French kingdom with Roman Gaul, with its boundaries formed by the Alps, the Rhine and the Pyrenees, was used to justify the aggressive expansionist policies of French rulers. Yet this view had almost no foundations. The kingdom of France, far from developing as a natural political and geographical unit, evolved gradually during the earlier Middle Ages from the decaying Roman empire and the Frankish kingdoms which arose in its place and reached their apogee in the Carolingian empire.

The lands which were to make up France showed a great diversity in their languages, peoples and cultures, a series of contrasts that have continued to influence French history, and which are further emphasised by its great geographical diversity. The northern and central regions of France are in a temperate zone, while the south enjoys a Mediterranean climate, and there are further variations of climate and vegetation connected with the existence of the great central mountainous region, the Massif Central, the Alps and the Pyrenees. The valleys of the great rivers, the Loire, the Seine and the Rhône, are fertile and provide channels of communication. They were settled early, but the settlements were separated by great tracts of forest, marsh and heath.

Before the Romans came these lands were inhabited by the Gauls, living in settlements organised into tribal groups; these the Romans described as *pagi*, and their larger groupings as *civitates*. Mediterranean Gaul had a well-developed city life and was a prosperous region, and it was conquered by the Romans as early as 121 BC. As the province of Narbonnnaise Gaul, or simply The Province (hence Provence),

it became an important part of the Roman empire. Expansion into northern Gaul came rather later; Caesar conquered it in 58–51 BC and it was divided into the three provinces of Belgic Gaul, Celtic or Lyonnaise Gaul and Aquitaine. The three Gauls could be administered as one, a unity unprecedented in pre-Roman times and the foundation of the sentiment of the 'Gallic motherland'.

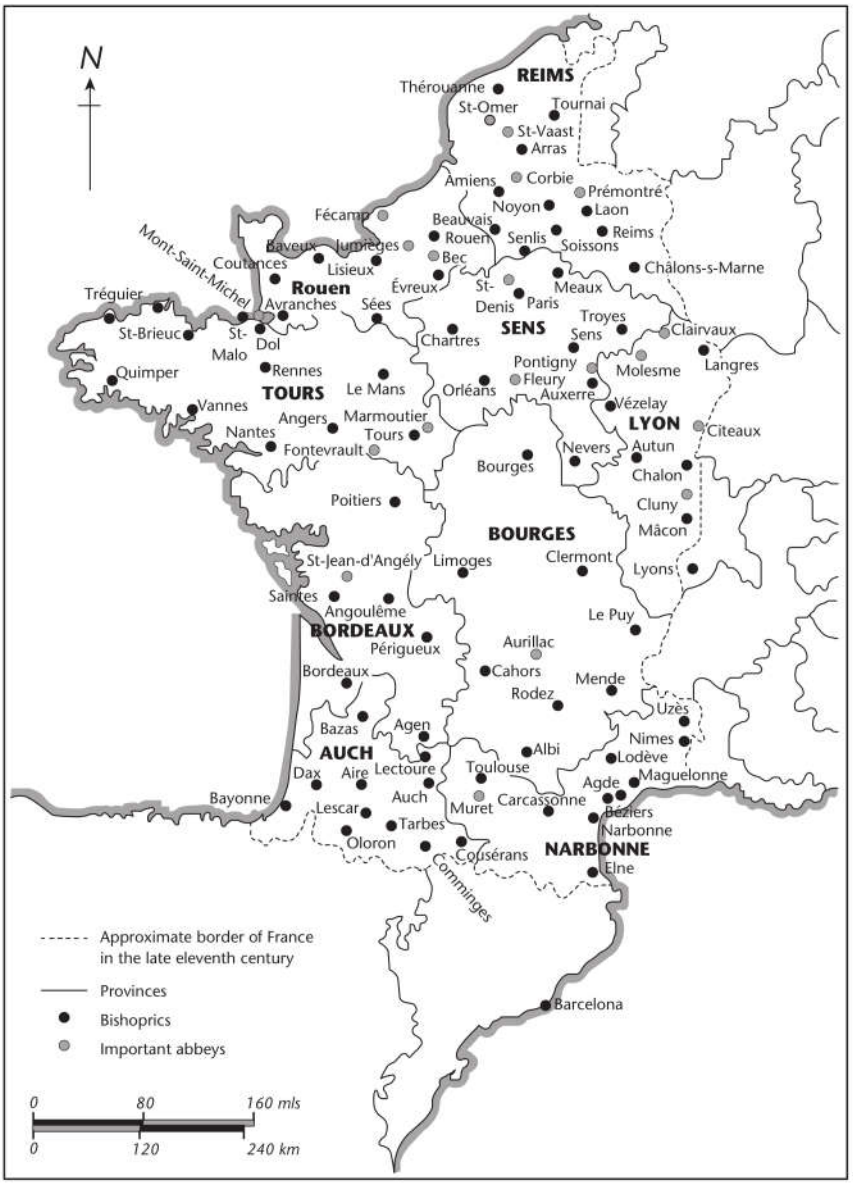
Existing *pagi* and *civitates* were often taken over by the Romans as the basis of their local government system, and Gallic and then Roman cities remained as regional centres and capitals into the Middle Ages and beyond. One important reason for this continuity of settlement was the adoption of these cities as centres of bishoprics by the Christian church, and although some were lost and others gained in succeeding centuries, the ecclesiastical provinces which eventually emerged by the tenth century and that lasted virtually unchanged until the French Revolution bore a broad correspondence with the divisions of Gaul into *civitates*, and with the Roman administrative organisation.

Gallic and Roman settlements had been denser in the south, and thus more archiepiscopal and episcopal sees were established there. The more isolated seats of bishops in the north often shrank greatly in size and were heavily fortified; some became the centres of important lordships. The ecclesiastical geography of France remained to some extent at variance with its political geography, and tensions sometimes arose as a result (e.g., compare Maps 1.1 and 1.4).

As the Roman empire collapsed in the west, a number of groups moved into Gaul and superimposed their own languages and cultures upon the existing inhabitants in varying degrees. Celtic-speaking Bretons moved into Brittany from western Britain; the Burgundians settled in south-eastern Gaul, the Visigoths in its south-west, although leaving room for Basque expansion in this region as well. Most striking of all was the expansion of the Franks, a militarised group of Germanic-speaking people who, after crossing the Rhine in the third century, first settled in the Low Countries and then, under King Clovis and his sons, overran the whole of Gaul. One of the Frankish kingdoms, known as west Francia, would become the kingdom of France, 'a direct legacy of what had once been Gaul'.[1]

The geographical extent of this kingdom was not, however, defined or limited either by the frontiers of Roman Gaul or by any 'natural frontiers', such as the Pyrenees or the Rhône. Regions were considered to be subject to the west Frankish kings that no longer form part of France, notably Catalonia. The kingdom of west Francia was simply the territory in which its king's authority was acknowledged, which fluctuated according to personal factors such as the wealth and familial alliances of individual kings.

In most of west Francia the common language was a Romance tongue based on low Latin, which was to develop into the French language. There were regional differences in this tongue, of which the most striking was the divide between the language of the south, the *Langue d'oc*, which was quite close to Catalan and was later known as Provençal, and the language of the north, the *Langue d'oil*, which had a stronger Celtic and German influence on it and which developed into modern French. The distinguishing '*oc*' and '*oil*' were the words used for 'yes' in the



MAP 1.1 Ecclesiastical provinces in medieval France

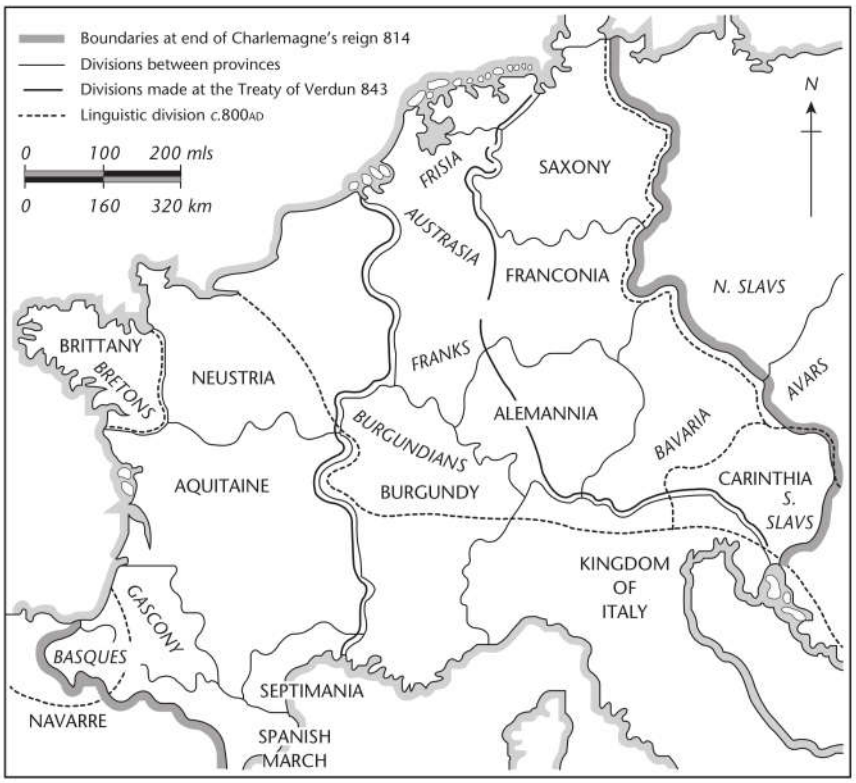
two parts of France, and the names Languedoil and Languedoc were later used for the northern and southern lands.

In addition, there were other considerable differences between north and south which emerged clearly as west Francia fragmented into a series of regional principalities in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The southern lands used Roman law,

MAP 1.2 The Frankish expansion, 356–795

which was written down; the northern lands followed customs which developed gradually and were not codified until the thirteenth century. Aristocratic society in the north had a considerable 'feudal' element in it; vassalage was almost unknown in the south (pp. 16–21).

There were other contrasts too, more local, some stemming from the different peoples found within the west Frankish kingdom, such as the Basques, the Bretons and later the Normans. But the common language of the church, and hence of

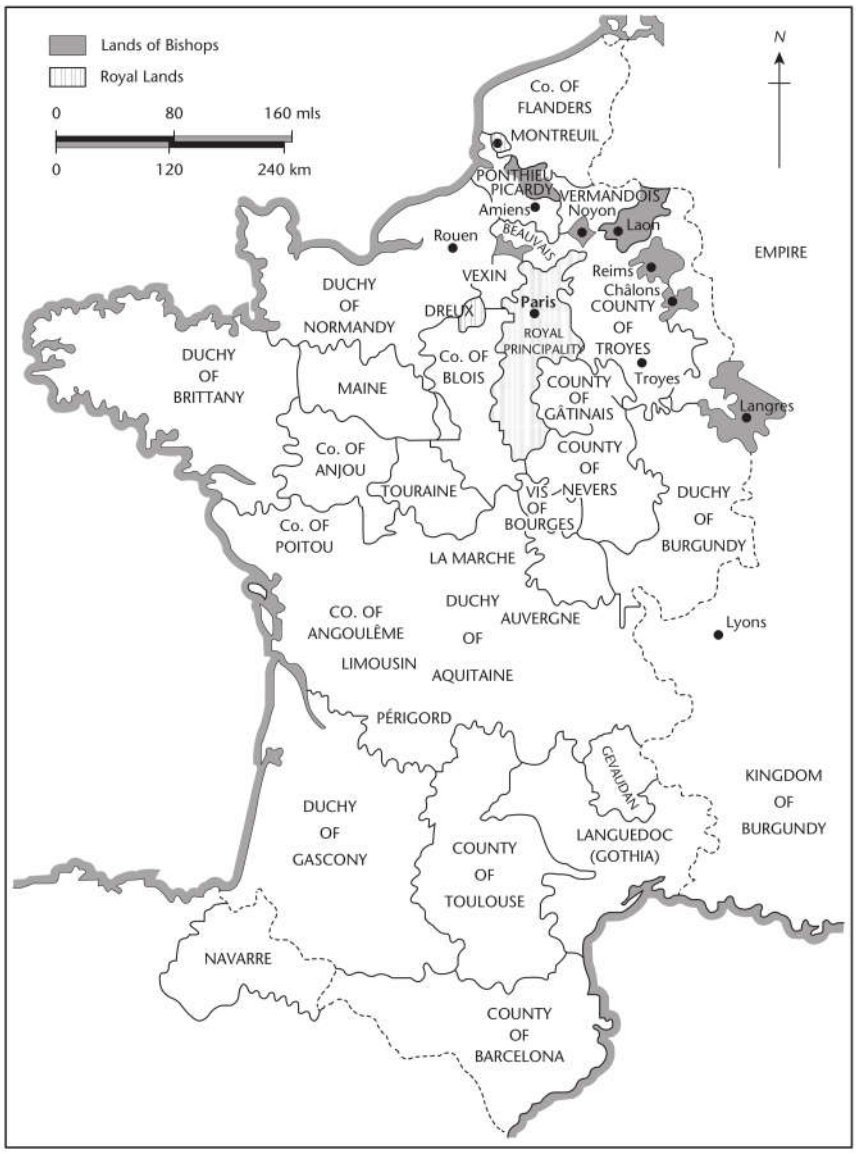


MAP 1.3 The Carolingian Empire

administration, remained Latin, and it was a vitally important medium of contact in the political life of western Europe as the Carolingian Empire came apart.

What did the name *Francia* mean in the tenth and eleventh centuries? It still retained a wide general use; both Byzantine and western writers at the time of the crusades described the western forces as Franks. But from the tenth century, the rulers of the east Frankish kingdom increasingly abandoned both the royal title *rex Francorum* – king of the Franks – and the name *Francia* to the western kingdom.

Yet in this 'French' context, as the area where the king could assert his authority shrank, the name *Francia* was additionally used to describe one of the three divisions of the kingdom (*Francia*, *Aquitania*, *Burgundia*). The Robertians, forerunners of the Capetians, were *duces Francorum*, dukes of the Franks, and their 'duchy' covered in theory most of northern France. Then as royal power contracted further, leaving the early Capetians only a small bloc of lands round Paris and Orléans (Map 1.4), the term *Francia* was used for this region. In the eleventh century the name could thus mean one of several things, which reflects the political decentralisation of the west Frankish – or French – kingdom in this period.



MAP 1.4 France in the mid-eleventh century

The French economy and society

A stagnant economy?

For many years the ninth and tenth centuries were considered an era of stagnation in the economy of northern and western Europe. The ideas of Henri Pirenne were very influential in shaping this view.[2] Writing before the Second World War, he suggested that the Germanic invasions of the fifth century, which brought to an

end the Imperial Roman government in the west and established the Merovingian kingdoms, still allowed the existing patterns of trade, centring on Constantinople, and economic life to continue. It was the rise of Islam in the seventh century which caused the true break with antiquity; the empire of Charlemagne, blocked off from the Byzantine world, was focussed northwards.

The economy of the Carolingian empire Pirenne considered to have been weak, static, agricultural and localised, despite Charlemagne's attempts to revive it; symbolic of this was the disappearance of gold coinage in the eighth century, not to reappear until the thirteenth. Further disruption was caused by the Vikings and other invaders in the eighth and ninth centuries, and signs of economic recovery, particularly an expansion in towns and commerce, were not to appear until the eleventh.

Ever since the 'Pirenne thesis' was put forward, historians have debated it, and it has subsequently been considerably revised. The sources for this period, both written and archaeological, are now read as indicating that the seventh century perhaps did mark a break with ancient patterns of trade and exchange, but that a slow expansion was already at work from as early as the eighth century.[3]

In the ninth century there are faint but definite signs of this economic expansion, of improving agricultural yields and of gradual growth in the population. Markets were selling both local produce and goods from further afield such as salt, slaves and luxuries – silk, spices and ivory – and urban life was beginning to revive. All this was, however, on a small scale, for the late Carolingian economy was undeniably agrarian-based.[4] And apart from rare gold coins with a ceremonial function, such as those struck for Louis the Pious, Carolingian coinage, which was fixed and controlled by the emperor up to the late ninth century, was not gold, but entirely silver.[5]

The effects on this slowly expanding economy of the new wave of invasions which gathered strength in the ninth century have also provoked considerable debate. These incursions came from several directions – the Vikings from the north, the Muslims from the south, and the Hungarians from the east. The Saracen pirates set up a base at Fraxinetum (La Garde-Freinet) in Provence, controlling the Alpine passes, terrorising the coast and causing considerable disruption in the area, both to life and trade. The Hungarian horsemen swept in from Pannonia, raiding frequently in northern Italy and Germany, and at times in France as well; in 937, for example, they reached Orléans. Their looting and pillaging produced major problems in lands east of France, and some localised hardship in France itself.

Far more significant for France, however, were the activities of the Vikings (Image 1.1 and 1.2). Our sources for their expeditions in the ninth century, as seen from the Frankish side, tend to present a picture of unmitigated gloom. In his celebrated mid-ninth-century account of the wanderings of the monks of Noirmoutier who fled from their island on the west coast of France eventually to settle at Saint-Philibert at Tournus, the monk Ermentarius writes:

> The number of ships grows larger and larger, the great host of Northmen continually increases; on every hand the Christians are the victims of massacres, looting, incendiarism, clear proof of which will remain as long as the world itself endures; they capture every city they pass through, and none

> can withstand them; they take the cities of Bordeaux, Périgueux, Limoges, Angoulême and Toulouse. Angers and Tours, as well as Orléans, are wiped out; the ashes of many a saint are carried away.[6]

To monastic chroniclers such as Ermentarius, the hordes of savage heathen raiders seemed to be a manifestation of the wrath of God. Accounts such as theirs, coloured by the outlook of the cloister, should not, however, be discounted as merely hysterical imaginings. In France as in England, the raids, with their plundering and burning, clearly caused much hardship, damage and misery on a local level for the monasteries, castles and towns attacked, although the Noirmoutier monks probably travelled further than most.

The long-term impact of the raids is harder to assess, for the destruction they wreaked clearly varied from region to region. The Paris basin, although often a target for attack, emerged fairly rapidly and relatively unscathed. The experience of western France, stretching from the coast to the Limousin, was different. This region was experiencing a period of expansion in the ninth century before the destruction of growing towns such as Bordeaux, and the disruptions and sense of danger which caused whole communities of peasants and monks to migrate. The impact of these raids, both psychological and physical, could have been felt for decades, if not longer.

Burgundy, by contrast, an area relatively unaffected by invasion, became a refuge for fleeing ecclesiastics, and a flourishing monasticism grew up there. The lower Seine had a different experience again. As the raiding activities of the Vikings gradually mixed with and then gave way to trading, settlements were established. The Scandinavian settlement on the banks of the Seine, recognised in 911 by Charles the Simple and later to develop into the Duchy of Normandy, was to play a vital role in trade, as well as in the political life of northern France (pp. 51–64).

From the mid-tenth century signs of economic expansion in western Europe became stronger; the cessation of the invasions and the stimulation of trade by the settlers may have been in part responsible for this. The Rhine valley, linking up with Flanders, Brabant and England, became a flourishing trade route; over a longer distance, the volume of trade with Venice and Byzantium expanded. Later in the eleventh century, the Norman conquests in southern Italy, Sicily and England, followed by the First Crusade, were to give a further boost to the longer trade routes.

In the tenth century, urban life in much of France tended to be centred on the great monastic houses rather than the merchant communities such as those found in the Rhineland towns. But on the northern coast of France and Flanders new ports began to appear in the eleventh century, at Ghent, at Harfleur. The dukes of Normandy and the counts of Flanders encouraged and often founded them, and also created new towns, such as Caen and Lille, in areas of expansion. The townspeople clearly had links with the surrounding countryside, but they were often granted special franchises giving personal liberty and freedom from taxation, later extended to include commercial and judicial privileges.

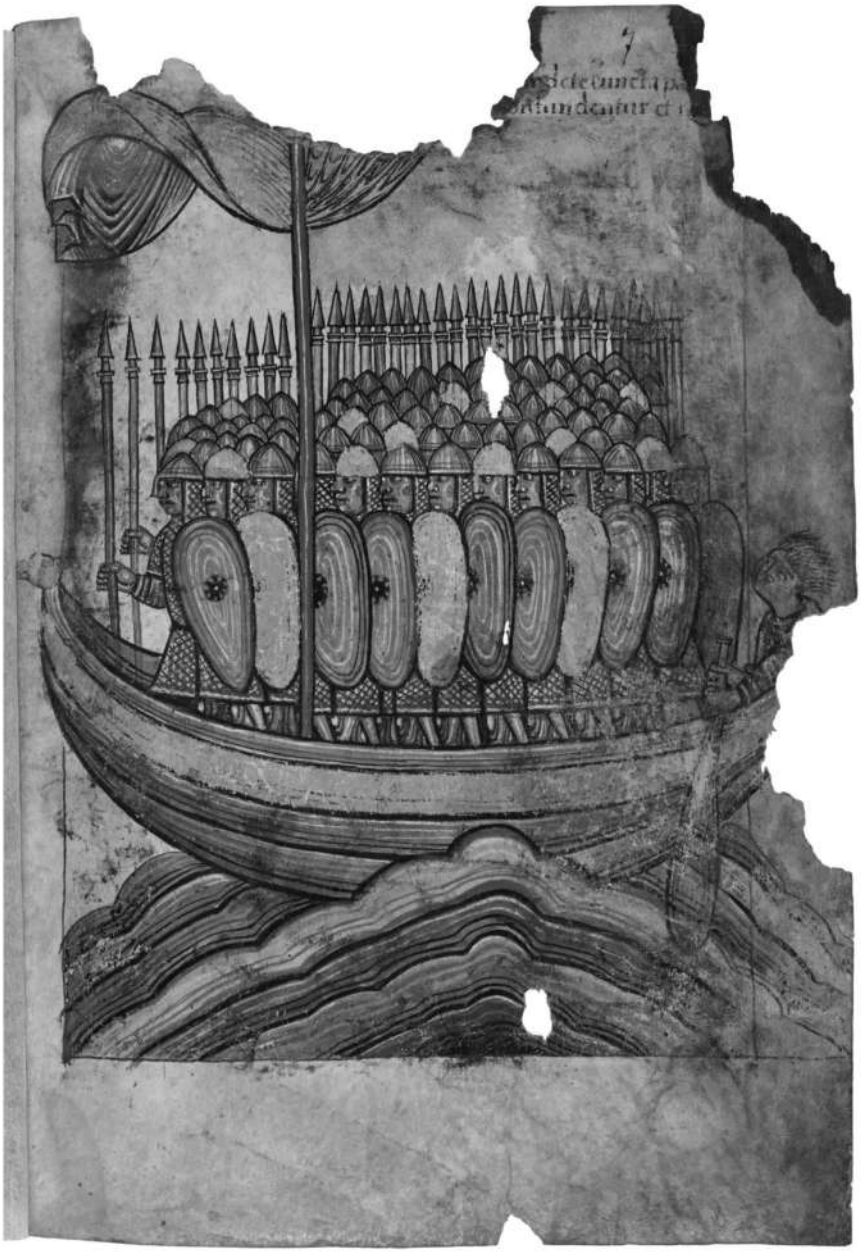


IMAGE 1.1 Raid – probably apocryphal – by Viking marauders on the abbey of Saint-Aubin, Angers

BN MS NAL 1390, f. 7r

IMAGE 1.2 Viking longboats: the Norman invasion of England, 1066, from the Bayeux Tapestry

From an engraving published in 1823 prior to the Tapestry's restoration by Charles Stothart, *Vetusta Monumenta*, vi, Society of Antiquaries (London, 1885), plate 9

In the late eleventh century, these urban communities began to develop into communes. These were personal associations formed to govern the towns, and marked a growing self-consciousness on the part of urban groups. Some of these associations were recognised in the twelfth century by charters from a duke, count or bishop allowing self-government in return for an often substantial payment (pp. 211–213). Normandy and Flanders appear to have been precocious in their development along these lines; towns and trade in other areas of France evolved more slowly.

Local markets in France also continued to expand, with an ever-growing use of silver currency. Like other public powers, the minting of coins had devolved to the princes and in many cases to local counts. More significantly, agricultural expansion also continued, with an acceleration in population growth, further improvements in farming techniques, and, perhaps most important, a great surge in land clearance. This was probably undertaken spontaneously by the peasantry at first, but in the eleventh and twelfth centuries came under the surveillance and supervision of the nobility, who created new privileged rural communities. Here France seems to have been in general considerably ahead of Germany; again, however, there was great local and regional variation in the rate at which development took place. One of the earliest areas to develop was the Paris basin, the Ile de France, where the Capetian kings' domain was centred. Although their political powers were limited, their own resources, the basis for future expansion, were becoming increasingly valuable.

Raoul Glaber, a Cluniac monk writing in the earlier eleventh century, perceived this renewed expansion and commented on it. He saw it as much in spiritual as in

economic terms, noting an ever increasing number of pilgrims on the roads. But he also observed what seemed to him a building boom:

> Just before the third year after the millennium, throughout the whole world, but most especially in Italy and Gaul, men began to reconstruct churches, although for the most part the existing ones were properly built and not in the least unworthy. But it seemed as though each Christian community were aiming to surpass all the others in the splendour of construction.[7]

Thus the economic growth that had tentatively begun in the early Middle Ages accelerated in the tenth century. Its development was highly uneven across France, but affected both the countryside and the nascent towns, particularly on the northern coast. Long-distance trade, which had never entirely vanished, gradually gathered momentum, while local markets became ever more active. In the 980s economic life in France was largely localised but by no means stagnant; in the 1120s it was still localised to a considerable degree, but growing rapidly.

Nobles and knights

Medieval writers frequently make the distinction between the *oratores*, the *laboratores* and the *bellatores*: those who pray, those who work and those who fight. Such a clear-cut division of the 'three orders' is valid in one sense, but it also presents society as largely static. Although people in France from the ninth century to the early twelfth would normally have fallen either into one of these three categories, or into that of the growing number of merchants and townsfolk, within each group people's status might have varied very considerably.

The higher clergy, monks and nuns were almost all drawn from the same families as the *bellatores*, although the monastic revival which began in the eleventh century was increasingly to bring in the townsfolk, and in the twelfth century even the peasantry, in the form of lay brothers. But between the great archbishop and the parish priest was a gulf as great as or greater than that which divided the great prince and the lesser knight. Between the free peasant with considerable allodial holdings (that is, land owned outright) and the poorest wage labourer, too, there was a great social difference.

In his important work, *Feudal Society*,[8] Marc Bloch suggested that in the anarchical conditions of the ninth and tenth centuries the Carolingian nobility largely disappeared, to be replaced by a new group, whose functions as leaders of society and warriors made them 'noble'. This new noble–knightly group did not become a fixed aristocratic caste until the later twelfth century.

Subsequently many historians such as Georges Duby swung away from this interpretation. The origins of the nobility of the *ancien régime* have in many cases been traced back in far greater numbers to the Carolingian nobility, suggesting a higher degree of continuity than was previously supposed. A group of German historians, most notably Werner, demonstrated that many of the high and middle

aristocracy of the tenth and eleventh centuries were descended directly from earlier Carolingian counts and palace officials.[9] Werner gave as examples the houses of Vermandois and Anjou, but similar conclusions were reached for the Chartrain by Chédeville, for the Loire area by Boussard, and for Poitou and Aquitaine by Martindale.[10]

Thus in many parts of France, the lines of the Carolingian nobility continued into the tenth century and beyond, and the regional princes were their descendants, as were likewise the great counts. The lesser counts and castellans, too, were often though not invariably offshoots of cadet branches. Normandy was of course an exception where ducal blood was important in conferring nobility.

Awareness of Carolingian origins has also been seen as an important cohesive force among the higher nobility, although less so among the lesser nobles. An interesting illustration of this cohesion is given by the monastic chronicler Adémar of Chabannes. In 1018, he says, William, duke of Aquitaine halted the fighting in a battle against the Normans for the sake of those taken prisoner, for they were *ex nobilioribus*, from the nobler of his men. The importance of noble rank is emphasised by Adémar in this extract, and so too is, by implication, the gulf between the ranks within the *bellatores*. This Strayer characterised as the '*two levels of feudalism*'.[11]

Until about 1000 the knights tended to form a lowly group, the descendants of the Carolingian retainers of magnate households. If they had holdings, these were limited in size, sometimes little larger than those of the wealthier peasants. While the nobles, from king to castellan, tended to build castles, the knights had none. By the twelfth century, however, in most areas of France, the knightly and noble classes were beginning to fuse together.[12]

In the eleventh century, the church glorified the notion of Christian knighthood in an attempt to curb what it perceived as anarchy, in connection with the peace of God movement. The knight was given a code of conduct to follow which would make salvation through the pursuit of knightly ideals possible, as an alternative to entering the cloister. Now often called a *miles*, his social standing began to improve, as he began to receive land in return for his services.

As knights became wealthier and better established, a shared appreciation of martial valour and the cult of chivalry helped erode any distinctions between them and the nobility. By about 1200 the two elements, noble and knightly, had in much of France joined to form an aristocracy that was both wider than before and more closed. Some knights began to live in fortified houses, and even if eclipsed in wealth by rich peasants and merchants, they were still part of a group set apart by its ideals. The *bellatores* had become more of an order in the thirteenth century than they had been in the tenth.

Lords and peasants

French society from the ninth to the twelfth century was predominantly rural, but it underwent a profound series of transformations. In the ninth century much of agrarian life was based on the *villae*, the great landed estates or manors such as those

described in the polyptychs or surveys of great landholders such as Irmino, abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés near Paris.

These *villae*, often very extensive, centred on the lord's domain (or demesne), an area within the manor that was worked by the peasantry. Those peasants also farmed their own holdings of different sizes within the manor, and they varied in their personal status between free *coloni* and serfs, a status that did not always coincide with that of their holding. From these tenants lords could demand rents, but their principal interest was in extracting labour services, turning to wage-earners only to meet any deficit. Such arrangements were frequently found in the areas between the Loire and the Rhine, but land was by no means invariably farmed in this way. There is evidence, for example, for the medium-sized estate in Picardy, and for small free peasant holdings or allods (estates held without acknowledgement to a superior) in many areas, particularly in the south where the use of Roman law favoured the survival of free holdings.

By the eleventh century, the *villa* structure was beginning to break down even in the north, and our sources indicate the development in France of highly diverse patterns of landholding. In the Seine, Oise and Somme areas, large units still prevailed; in north-east France, Normandy and Anjou they were normally of a medium size; in Brittany very small. In Maine, Poitou, Anjou and Saintonge, independent holdings or *bordages* were grouped together to form larger economic units – found also at times in Normandy and Brittany. In the disintegration of larger units, land was often usurped, divided amongst heirs or granted to the church.

The lord's domain lands shrank, often being taken over by stewards or bailiffs, or granted out in farms to the peasants. In Normandy servitude disappeared altogether; in other areas labour services were lightened. Much of this stemmed from new economic factors which were all part of a general expansion that was the result of the initiative of both lords and peasants, sometimes working in tandem: the reclamation of land at an increasing rate which produced the class of *hôtes*, relatively free colonisers; steady improvement in agricultural techniques associated with increased sale of surpluses; the growth of exchange and of the use of silver coinage (pp. 173–175).

The breakdown in earlier patterns of land holding brought with it new kinds of manorial organisation. In the ninth century the lord had exercised certain seigneurial powers over his agricultural dependants: he demanded labour services and rents from them and in practice exercised what came later to be called low justice, involving the maintenance of law and order on the estate. But as political authority and public power fragmented, lords in many areas came formally to exercise a greatly increased control over their dependants, based on rights granted by or taken from the king, prince, count or even from a lesser noble.

These rights were both judicial, involving high justice (rights over life and limb), and financial. New dues were levied that from the twelfth century were seen as customary dues or *coutûmes*, an inherent part of the personal powers of the lord. Thus the lord held monopolies over milling, baking and wine pressing; he controlled tolls, markets and fairs. He could levy the *taille* or head tax, demand military service, and later, attempt to impose heavier labour dues.

These powers extended to cover people who would not have formally come under his authority in the ninth century: the free tenants within his estate and also the holders of lands outside its boundaries, whose ancestors had commended themselves to him for protection. In many parts of the Paris basin, Burgundy, Maine, Poitou and other northern areas, this kind of domination, known as bannal lordship, was common, and a symbol of the disintegration of public authority. Clerics, and especially monks, often criticised the exercise of these rights, and questioned their legitimacy. But in these areas, too, whilst their personal rights diminished, the peasantry benefitted to some extent from the general increase in prosperity.

The structure of power

Principalities, counties and castellanies

Already in the ninth century, royal power in the west Frankish kingdom was shared with trusted aristocrats. Royal administrators entrusted with the government and defence of the various provinces or sub-kingdoms became increasingly powerful as they were delegated many powers by the Carolingian monarchs, or stepped into the breach as political entrepreneurs in the crises that followed the ignominious deposition of Emperor Charles the Fat in 887. By the early tenth century, the regional leaders within the kingdom of west Francia were known as dukes (*duces*) or princes (*principes*). It was these figures who ruled in the provinces of Aquitaine and Burgundy; the border regions of Gascony, the Spanish March (Barcelona) and Septimania (Toulouse) also split away from the kingdom and became semi-autonomous. Royal power was concentrated in the north of the kingdom, in Neustria, and royal weakness (pp. 25–26) undoubtedly helped these princes to consolidate their authority. The importance of the princely office is exemplified in the struggles between the counts of Toulouse, Poitou and Auvergne to earn the title of duke of Aquitaine.

In the north of France, the Viking or Norman settlers were given their own lands, and a number of other political units appeared there too: Brittany (with a strong ethnic basis), Anjou, Maine, Blois, Flanders. Many were created by local counts who amassed a number of counties and consolidated them into a principality. Some of their rulers were styled as princes, and used the titles of duke or count. Meanwhile, the royal lands contracted as the Robertian house, dukes of Francia, built up its power in the Paris and Orléans area, and its members, later known as the Capetians, eventually replaced the Carolingians as kings.

Some of these principalities remained well established. Others, however, proved themselves to be fragile constructions, and threatened to fragment into their constituent counties during the tenth century, as royal authority over princely and comital dynasties declined. All were affected in some degree by the rise of bannal lordships: for in many parts of France the counties and the *pagi*, their constituent units, disappeared, as the idea of public authority was overshadowed, and new political units appear in the sources. In a bannal lordship the local seigneur, whether a castellan or a monastery, wielded a powerful and independent economic, judicial and fiscal

authority over his men. This was in northern France based not on public authority, but on powers perceived as customary (*coutûmes*). So although initially a castellan might have been delegated various rights by his lord with the custody of his castle, his family in many cases succeeded in making the lordship and the rights hereditary, and he was often able to prevent his overlord from repossessing the castle itself.

In many cases, too, new castles sprang up without the permission of the local count and their holders assumed customary powers over the local inhabitants, disrupting the old order whilst creating a new one. Usually these new families were offshoots of existing castellan houses of the area. In areas such as Picardy, Berry, and parts of Burgundy, these lords were the rulers. In other principalities such as Blois and Anjou they gained a great deal of power, and in the royal principality in the eleventh century they posed a considerable problem to the kings. In Normandy, where ducal power was for its time remarkably strong, they began to appear at times of relative ducal weakness.

Since the 1990s, there has been much debate over these changes in the political organisation of society in the west Frankish kingdom between 850 and 1100. For some historians, the emergence of bannal lordships represents a 'feudal transformation' (*la mutation féodale*) around the year 1000, sufficiently profound and abrupt to be described as the 'feudal revolution', as public authority ceased to play any role in most people's lives. This process was compounded by castellan violence as the great territorial principalities disintegrated (a violence that has been emphasised by Thomas Bisson[13]), and by the social unrest and psychological uncertainties surrounding the millennium.

More recently, Dominique Barthélemy amongst others has detected a stronger continuity in institutions in many parts of France, and much less widespread disruption from millenarian fears, local warfare or even castellan brutality. In this interpretation, rooted in an older paradigm, it was the emergence of the territorial principalities themselves around 900, when Carolingian kingship spiralled into crisis, that marked the true 'feudal transformation'. Yet these principalities were originally legitimate creations, whose rulers preserved Carolingian institutions; and legal frameworks persisted, often supported by the church.[14] Stephen White has argued powerfully that, in any case, the weakening of central authority did not necessarily lead to anarchy, since disputes could be resolved peacefully, and that violence was deployed carefully and strategically, contrary to the impression given by monastic record-keepers prone to rhetorical exaggeration.[15]

Perhaps it is best to acknowledge that fragmentation – or more neutrally, political decentralisation – took place at different times, in different ways and with different consequences in different regions of France. In some principalities, such as Normandy (pp. 51–64), ducal authority remained strong, if not unchallenged; in others, major structural change occurred as political authority fragmented, first at the level of the principality and then even at the level of the county, such as the Mâconnais (pp. 39–40). Increasingly some of the older principalities are being seen as fragile and temporary constructions thrown up in the crisis of the Carolingian empire, and thus with little original coherence.

It is still possible to make generalisations about the processes of change that were at work across Francia. Wickham identified two components:

> first, the changing relationship between local aristocratic power and wider-based political forces, such as those controlled by kings and the more powerful counts, dukes and bishops. Secondly, the development of increasingly explicit and, indeed, formal personal relationships and social boundaries at the local level, which come more and more to characterise social practice.[16]

The second is the process described by Fossier as '*encellulement*' or cellularisation, the political and juridical isolation of relatively small communities: the family, the village, the castellany. As a consequence, the vast majority of the populace no longer participated in any larger political unit, such as the kingdom.[17]

That dynamic began to reverse in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries, when various princely dynasties, and the royal house, fought back against such lords, many of whom had built up major local baronies. The king and the princes had to reassert the right to occupy their castles, and to affirm a real dominance over them, through enforcing obligations of military service, aid and obedience. They had to restrict private wars and to build up their own administrative and judicial systems. In many cases this was achieved only with great difficulty, for the castellans, like the princes, had won a major place in French society at the time of the early Capetian kings.

Society in the early Capetian period was thus characterised by great local variations in the structure of power, the frequent isolation of small local communities, great complexity of and confusion over lands and rights, and constant fighting for the domination of blocs of territory. This raises the questions of how society was organised, and of what were the links between the knights, the nobles and the king.

The bonds of society: vassalage and the fief

Of the various elements which 'feudal society' is considered by many historians to encompass, we have already dealt briefly with the fragmented nature of political authority, with the classes of knights and nobles, and with the infrastructure – the rural settlements where the great bulk of the population lived and worked. Whereas the social arrangement of the peasantry was geared towards agricultural production, those members of the knightly and noble ranks in society who were not in the church organised themselves to rule and to conduct warfare. In this latter, in the eleventh century, they indulged with a startling frequency and vigour.

The institutions of vassalage and the fief were long considered as having been the principal means by which the nobility acquired the resources to fight, and to have formed the basis of a social organisation which was, in theory at least, hierarchical. After the Second World War, doubts were increasingly cast on this general

thesis by detailed research on the social structure of many areas of France in the eleventh and the twelfth centuries.

In order to see this questioning in context, it is necessary to rehearse and examine the classical interpretation of this so-called 'feudal' order. The work of Ganshof on the origins and development of vassalage and the fief, concentrating strongly on their juridical aspects, represents this traditional approach, while Bloch's renowned *Feudal Society* examines the phenomena in a wider context.[18] The discussion which follows relates mainly to northern and central France; conditions were different in the south (pp. 67–73).

According to this view, the bond of vassalage was an ancient and personal one. One man commended himself to another, paid homage (Image 1.3) by ceremonially placing his hands between those of his lord, and from Carolingian times took an oath of fidelity to him. The oath was often sworn on relics, and this gave the ceremony a religious character. For both parties obligations were undertaken: the lord would afford his man protection and sustenance, the vassal would in return give him loyalty and service.

In Merovingian and early Carolingian times this could involve little more than a noble keeping armed retainers in his household, a practice that continued throughout the Middle Ages. Increasingly, however, the sustenance of a vassal involved the granting of a benefice, which from the late eleventh century came often to be described as a fief. This reverted to the lord on the death of the vassal, in theory at least.

IMAGE 1.3 A vassal swears an oath of homage to his lord, in this case a representative of the French king

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The Carolingian kings increasingly took on as vassals men of a high social standing, frequently of noble rank, who held great allodial estates as well. Often they were granted benefices for holding public offices as counts or markgraves, and during the ninth century they tended to put down local roots, to make their benefices hereditary, and if possible to convert them into allodial holdings, involving no ties of dependency.

Whereas earlier benefices had frequently been granted to men who were not vassals, and vassals had not always been given benefices, later vassalage and benefices became more closely associated. Royal control was undermined, and as commendation and grants of benefices spread down rapidly from the princes to the counts and then to viscounts and other subordinates, so here too the rights of the lord could be and were taken over. Princely and comital authority often decayed in the wake of royal power (pp. 33–34).

By the eleventh century, then, the bonds of vassalage had spread down through society, the grant of a benefice had become a fairly frequent concomitant of commendation, and these benefices or fiefs were becoming hereditary on a wide scale. The mutual obligations and safeguards surrounding them had also been clarified. The fief would revert to the lord's control when there was no heir, when the heir was a woman or a minor, or as the penalty for the withdrawal of faith by a vassal. Nor in theory could fiefs be dismembered or sold without the lord's permission. The vassal's obligations from the ninth century onwards were recognised as *auxilium* – military or monetary aid – and *consilium*, counsel, attendance at the lord's court and the giving of advice, sitting in judgement or being judged.

This is the classic definition of the feudal hierarchy. But how well do the sources support it? As many sources testify, the obligations that ensued from the bonds of vassalage, the grant of a fief and the paying of homage were widely known and understood in various parts of France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A noted letter of Bishop Fulbert of Chartres gives a clear and full definition of the mutual obligations of the lord and the vassal.

In offering advice to Duke William of Aquitaine over a rebellious vassal in about 1020, Fulbert says that:

> He who swears fidelity to his lord should always keep these six terms in mind: safe and sound, secure, honest, useful, easy, possible. Safe and sound, that is, not to cause his lord any harm as to his body. Secure, that is, not to endanger him by betraying his secrets or the fortresses which make it possible for him to be secure. Honest, that is, not to do anything that would detract from his lord's rights of justice or the other prerogatives which have to do with his honour. Useful, not to cause him any loss as regards his possessions. Easy and possible, not to make it difficult for his lord to do something that would be of value to him and that he could otherwise do with ease, or to render it impossible for him to do what was otherwise possible. That the vassal (*fidelis*) should avoid injuring his lord in any of these ways is only right, but this does not entitle him to a fief; for it is not enough for him to abstain

> from evil, it is also necessary to do good. So it remains for him to give his lord faithful counsel and aid as regards these six points if he wishes to be considered worthy of his benefice and secure as to the fidelity he has sworn. The lord, in his turn, should be faithful to his vassal in these matters.[19]

This is an idealised picture, as is shown by the various double dealings which actually took place between the duke and his vassal Hugh of Lusignan, but it is nevertheless a valuable statement about the ideals of the relationship between lord and follower.

An interesting account of the rendering of homage is given by Galbert of Bruges in his work on the murder of Charles the Good, count of Flanders, and the election in his stead of William Clito; this dates from the early twelfth century. The nobility of Flanders came before the new count in April 1127.

> First, they did homages like this: the count inquired if he wished wholeheartedly to become his man, and he answered 'I do', and, with his hands joined, embraced by the count's hands, they were allied with a kiss. In the second place, he who had done homage gave faith to the count's spokesman with these words: 'I vow by my faith that I will henceforth be faithful to Count William and will respect unfailingly the homage done to him against everyone, in good faith and without any desire to deceive'. And he swore the same, in the third place on the relics of the saints. Then the consul [i.e., the count] gave investitures with the staff, which he was holding in his hand, to all those who had by this compact promised security and done homage and also sworn an oath.[20]

These accounts were written by ecclesiastics, and the church played an important role in promoting the idea of a social hierarchy; the layered organisation developed by the Cluniac congregation of monasteries may have later provided a pattern for a lay social order. The chronicler Raoul Glaber refers frequently to gradations of social status, distinguishing loosely between the *maximi*, the *mediocres* and the *minimi* – those of the greater, the middling and the lesser sorts, although the precise composition of those in the middle is not easy to discern. In Abbot Suger's *Life of King Louis VI*, again a twelfth-century work, Duke William X of Aquitaine is said to have declared to the king that just as he holds his duchy from Louis VI, the count of Auvergne holds his county from him.[21] This was written when the reality of the hierarchy was beginning to emerge and is an example of an account which sought to foster it.

Clearly, then, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries the concepts and the institutions of vassalage and the fief, and the idea of a hierarchical society, were present in France. They implied a neatly ordered and structured society, with the king at the top and below him orders of nobles bound to one another by mutual obligations: the knight would do homage to a castellan, who would do homage to a count, who would do homage to a duke, who would do homage to the king.

This was the theory, but in practice, only perhaps in Normandy – and in England and the Latin Crusader states where the social order was imposed from above – was there any clear and general hierarchical order in society. Only in Normandy could the king-dukes insist that the vassals of their vassals owed ultimate allegiance to them; and even here the gap between theory and reality was considerable. Elsewhere in France, direct authority tended to be recognised only on the rung of the ladder directly below a lord. Thus in the eleventh century the king exercised authority only over certain of the princes, and then intermittently, but had no powers over their men.

In most of France, political and social structures were both variable and at times highly complex. Obligations based on personal commendation and the grant of lands had existed since Merovingian times and continued to matter, especially in northern France. In areas such as Normandy and Flanders and to a lesser extent in Anjou, they were a strong weapon in the maintenance of ducal or comital control. In many other parts of France during the late tenth and eleventh centuries, though, they formed only part of a richer picture.

It was inevitable that there would be problems in a social organisation where control at the top was weak. People could and frequently did commend themselves to two or more lords, diluting the significance of fealty and making their obligations exceedingly difficult to honour. In response to this problem, the concept of liege homage evolved in the twelfth century. Here the obligations to one lord, often the most powerful, outweighed all others. This did not however necessarily create the basis for stable relations in practice, although in cases of multiple commendation, the king's rights were recognised above those of all other lords.[22] But another difficulty was that a noble might not be sufficiently strong to intervene within the lands of an erring follower, to punish him for his misdeeds or to prevent him from usurping rights such as those of justice and taxation.

In many areas of France, moreover, the social structure was very far from resembling Ganshof's idealised representation. Two influential studies of politically decentralised regions, the Mâconnais in Burgundy by Duby, and Picardy by Fossier (pp. 39, 51), have shown that in these areas fiefs were not common until the late twelfth century, and that in the eleventh and earlier twelfth centuries lands were normally held as allods. Homage and fealty certainly existed in both these areas, but they were regarded as much as political agreements or treaties as a means of control. This was often because such contracts did not involve land. A pyramidal social structure did not emerge in any form in either area, or in other similar regions, until the thirteenth century. In other more southern areas of France, too, such as Gascony and the county of Toulouse, allods existed in large numbers into the later Middle Ages, contracts of vassalage were virtually unknown, and the independence of the castellans proved a considerable problem to those who tried to dominate them (pp. 74–76).

It would also be erroneous to interpret all social bonds in this period as being defined by vertical hierarchies. Equally important were the horizontal bonds between individuals, forming communities that were capable of collective activity.

The most conspicuous example in this period is that of the 'commune' of townsmen acting to further the interests of their town by seeking freedom from seigneurial exactions. More pervasive, though, were the bonds linking, for example, the congregation of a parish, or suitors of a particular court, or members of a religious community.[23]

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, then, the ties of vassalage and the fief, although widely spread and holding a significant place in the social organisation of many areas of France, by no means always provided a structure for society. Throughout the early Capetian period, they were viewed primarily as marking a personal relationship rather than as defining a contract of landholding and service. In many areas they did not exist as a means of control until the twelfth or thirteenth century or even later, and then their growth often coincided with the spread of royal influence. The important local unit of power in many regions of France in the eleventh century was the castellany, almost autonomous and centred on the castle, its lords exercising as customary powers an authority that had previously been considered as public.

Church and society

A vitally important element in tenth- and eleventh-century French society and a source of stability was the church. During the Carolingian era the extensive estates of the great abbeys in particular were frequently drawn on by kings and by the abbots that they had appointed, occasionally laymen, to support the secular elites. They constituted a source of revenues and a reservoir of lands to be drawn on for benefices to reward loyal followers, and might also support and supply military contingents.

As autonomous reform movements within the church began to gather momentum from the tenth century, especially within monasteries, such practices now seemed purely exploitative, and were represented as such by chroniclers and other record-makers. Yet they were symptomatic of the realities of local political geography. Ecclesiastical estates were always closely connected with their local communities; indeed by the eleventh century, churches had often profited from the shift in the location of political authority and themselves held powers of bannal lordship.

But as the centralised structure of power broke down, the king's authority over many – although by no means all – bishoprics and abbeys fell into the hands of the princes, counts and castellans, whom churchmen perceived as exploiters rather than protectors. In many areas the king was too weak to render practical assistance, and they turned to the episcopate and to the papacy for help. The church was often able to find various practical solutions, providing some degree of protection, stability and structure both for ecclesiastics and for the populace in general, and increasingly positioned itself as the dominant force in society.

The abbey of Cluny (pp. 122–126) set an important example. Founded around 910, Cluny gradually became the centre of a great network. It first gained exemption from

episcopal authority for some houses in this network and then extended it to all, so that by *c.*1027 it was dependent on the papacy alone. Various early eleventh-century popes granted Cluny and its daughter-houses freedom from the exactions of temporal lords (this was not easy to enforce) and exemption from episcopal surveillance. All these factors probably stimulated the organisation of Cluny's daughter-houses into a more or less coherent structure in the eleventh century. This may also be seen as a reaction against the generally anarchical conditions that Cluniac monks saw prevailing in many parts of France, and it presented an ordered pattern in an age not noted for centralised administration.

How did the lay powers react to this? The French kings interested themselves mainly in Cluniac houses which were royal or in the royal principality. Philip I placed Saint-Martin-des-Champs under Cluny's aegis but as far as possible resisted any encroachment of papal authority. Henry I, his father, had tended to favour monasteries of canons regular which were dependent on the local episcopate, rather than the great Benedictine religious houses which were building up a considerable measure of autonomy.

In other parts of France, lay reaction varied. Some important monastic patrons and benefactors associated their houses with this increasingly prestigious network. Duke William of Aquitaine gave Saint-Eutrope at Saintes to Cluny in 1081, and placed great emphasis on its connections with the papacy, which had been initiated somewhat earlier. Often, however, it was papal rather than royal or noble initiative which extended Cluniac influence. While the Cluniacs did not directly promulgate the papal reforms of the eleventh century, they represented a pattern of an exempt group of religious, and they often helped to disseminate general ideas of renewal, and of the independence of ecclesiastical lands and communities from the laity. It was these ideas that increasingly led the church to perceive conditions in society as disordered and requiring action, and it responded by promulgating the peace of God.[24]

This movement originated in the troubled areas of Burgundy and Aquitaine in the late tenth century. Both here and further south in the Languedoc where Roman law, with its emphasis on public peace, still persisted, it was of fundamental importance in introducing the notion of a general terrestrial law and order reflecting an ideal heavenly harmony, with a strong and independent church. This the political institutions of society were patently unable to provide. The movements may have gained an additional impetus through popular tensions associated with the millennium, which have perhaps been underestimated in some recent accounts. There are a number of contemporary references to the millennium in the chronicle sources of the period, suggesting that the years 1000 and 1033 – seen respectively as a thousand years after Christ's death and after his resurrection – might have stood out in a general climate of sensitivity about the Apocalypse. Such anxieties need not have paralysed people with fear, so much as galvanised them to find a remedy for a sinful society before it was too late to make amends.

The peace of God placed under ecclesiastical protection priests, church property and church buildings, together with the poor and their goods. Oaths of peace

parallel with those of fidelity were also given. Similar protection had been granted by the Carolingian kings, but now the initiative passed to secular church councils headed by the episcopate, though often in conjunction with great lay magnates. The violence exercised by aristocrats, to some extent a traditional feature of noble life in the early Middle Ages, was now condemned as illegitimate.

The first clear examples of these councils were at Le Puy in 975 and Charroux in 989–90 where canons were issued in defence of the poor and the church; these were followed by other councils in southern France such as Narbonne, Limoges, Poitiers, and Verdun-sur-le-Doubs. The movement spread rapidly to other parts of France including the royal domain. A vivid though rather partisan portrayal of the peace council at Limoges in 994 is given by the chronicler Adémar of Chabannes. He describes a climate of unrest, exacerbated by widespread disease which he saw as a punishment by God for the sins of mankind. All this came to an end when the relics of Saint Martial, of whom Adémar was a fervent admirer, were brought out, and the duke of Aquitaine and his leading men concluded a pact of peace.

A later form of the peace, known to historians as the 'truce of God', attempted to ban acts of violence at particular times, initially between Saturday evenings and Monday mornings. This aspiration first appeared at the council of Toulonges in Roussillon, and in the 1030s and 1040s spread widely, both in the geographical area covered and in the number of prohibited days. Perhaps the culmination of the whole movement was in 1054, at the ecclesiastical council of Narbonne, where it was declared that no Christian should kill another.

Later, the movement lost impetus. But it opened up the ground for the preaching of the First Crusade, which called for an internally peaceful Christian society joining together and waging war against the infidel to free Jerusalem from Muslim domination (pp. 131–132). This holiest of cities was seen as at the centre of the world, as shown in this eleventh-century *mappa mundi* from Gascony, in which France (*Gallia*) is at the bottom left (Image 1.4).

In areas such as Normandy and Flanders where the church was firmly under ducal or comital control, the peace of God was promulgated by the secular leaders and eventually became associated with the idea of ducal or public peace – and later too with royal peace. Thus, as with the secular institutions, the organisation of the church varied from area to area in France according to the state of political power and as a reaction to local conditions. In the regions where political power was most fragmented, it began to provide leadership and to create some kind of structure for society.

Political developments of the tenth century

987: the beginning of a new era?

In 985 Gerbert of Aurillac wrote from Reims to two secret correspondents in Germany: 'Lothar is king of France in name only; Hugh not in name, it is true, but in deed and fact'.[25] Within two years Hugh Capet, duke of the Franks, had become

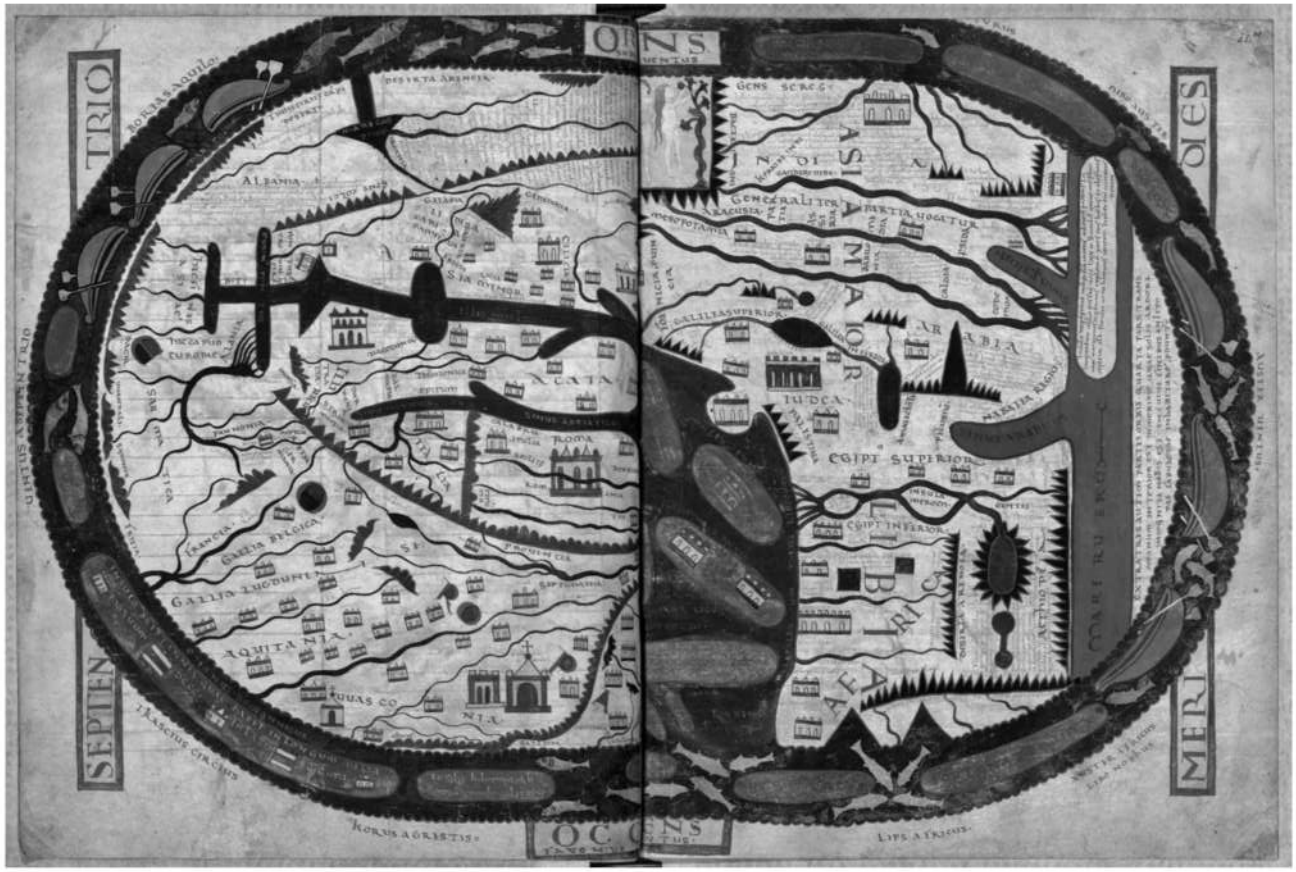

IMAGE 1.4 The St-Sever Beatus, map of western Europe's known world, *c.*1060

BN MS Latin 8878, f. 45v

king of France in name as well, in succession to Lothar's shortlived heir, Louis V, the last Carolingian king of France. The historian is easily beguiled into endowing this event with tremendous significance. In 987 a dynasty began an uninterrupted period of rule under which the fragmented west Frankish society of the late tenth century developed into what became, for its time, western Europe's most centralised, powerful and thoroughly-governed state.

The Capetians were a family which produced as their kings a fair share with only moderate talent and courage, but also strikingly able warriors, capable administrators, accomplished and successful politicians, and a saint, and under whom the authority and prestige of France reached heights unsurpassed by any other western European kingdom.

Yet it was a family three of whose members had already ruled France in the century preceding 987. They are known as the Robertians after the family's leading name, yet it is customary to describe their direct descendants as the Capetians, after Hugh Capet. Why is this so?

The name 'Capet' – derived probably from *chapet* and meaning the wearer of a short coat or cloak – was from the eleventh century used for both Hugh Capet and his father Hugh the Great, although by the end of the thirteenth it was attached primarily to the son. In 1790, at the time of the French Revolution, the expression 'Capetian' was coined as a term of abuse, linked with Hugh Capet but applying derogatively to all the ruling houses of France since 987. In the nineteenth century it was retained, but it was restricted to Hugh Capet and his direct descendants, a usage which has subsequently prevailed.[26]

Custom thus justifies us in discussing and analysing developments in France between 987 and 1328, but it is evident that political and military occurrences such as the conquest of most of the Plantagenet lands in 1203–4 and the outbreak of the Hundred Years War in 1337 mark more decisive milestones in medieval French history than moments of dynastic break. While, therefore, in an account revolving largely round the monarchy, the years 987 and 1328 provide us with a convenient timespan, the relative lack of importance attached to these events by contemporaries must be born in mind.

The lack of drama over the election of Hugh Capet illustrates this point, especially when looked at in the context of the previous century of the history of France. The Carolingian house, it is true, had in normal circumstances been accepted as the ruling dynasty, but where the heir was manifestly too young or too weak to carry out his kingly duties the west Frankish throne had passed into the hands of nobles with the power, wealth and influence to rule, and with the ability to hold the throne against the shifting coalitions of other nobles and ecclesiastics that struggled against them. These men were all of the same noble family, known as the Robertians, which was later to produce Hugh Capet.

In 888 Odo, the first of them, was elected king in West Francia in preference to the young Carolingian, Charles the Simple, in the turmoil that

followed the deposition of Emperor Charles the Fat a few months previously. Odo ruled the march of Neustria, which comprised most of northern France, and he wielded great influence in the kingdom in general, so that he appeared the only suitable leader against the invading Northmen. After his death in 898 the Carolingian Charles the Simple became king at last, but his ineffectual rule aroused the opposition of a group of nobles who had Robert, brother of Odo, crowned in 922.

After Robert's death in 923 his son-in-law Raoul was crowned in his place, and succeeded in holding on to the throne until his own demise in 936. The title of king then reverted to the young Carolingian Louis IV '*d'Outremer*', but Hugh the Great, son of King Robert, was undoubtedly the most powerful noble in the kingdom. Duke of the Franks, he was the heir to the overlordship of Neustria, count of Paris, and lay abbot of several important monasteries; and from 954 he controlled Burgundy too. Hugh nevertheless supported the election of Louis IV, and at first tried to dominate him. As the reign progressed, however, it was marked by constantly shifting alliances between the king, Hugh the Great, Emperor Otto I of Germany and powerful nobles including Herbert of Vermandois, Theobald count of Blois and William Longsword, duke of Normandy. Hugh overpowered King Louis; in 945 he imprisoned him and took Laon from him, but he was excommunicated in 948 by Pope Agapitus II, came under pressure from the Ottonians, and eventually submitted to the king in 950.

Although the Carolingian lands were limited, and easily matched by the estates of the *dux Francorum*, when Louis died in 954 he was replaced as king by his eldest son Lothar. A few years later, Hugh the Great died in 956 and his lands were divided; his eldest son Hugh, later known as 'Capet', took the northern French lands, and his second son took Burgundy. The pattern of shifting alliances of the previous reign continued. King Lothar, clearly realising the weakness of his position, tried to remedy matters by over-running southern Lotharingia, part of the old Middle Kingdom in dispute with the Holy Roman Emperors. This resulted in a conflict with Emperor Otto II, who with the help of Hugh Capet reconquered the lost land and overran parts of France.

In 983 Otto died, leaving as his heir the infant Otto III, with Henry duke of Bavaria as a rival for the German throne. Duke Henry promised southern Lotharingia – roughly modern French Lorraine – to Lothar in return for his support, and the king, taking advantage of this offer, moved into the region, and besieged and took Verdun. Opposition to Lothar was meanwhile mounting within France. Adalbero, the powerful archbishop of the important see of Reims and a native of Lotharingia, was the brother of the count of Verdun. Self-interest and local sympathy made him a supporter of the Ottonians; furthermore several of his relatives were captured by Lothar at Verdun. Another Ottonian sympathiser was the noted scholar Gerbert of Aurillac, who had helped Adalbero to re-establish the school of Reims. In 980 Otto II had made him abbot of the wealthy monastery of Bobbio, and later Otto III would appoint him as Pope Sylvester II.

Gerbert and Adalbero gave full support to the young Otto III and his mother the Empress Theophano, and they also managed to involve Hugh Capet (whose mother Hedwig was the sister of Otto I) and other nobles against Lothar and Henry of Bavaria. Realising the gravity of the threat, Lothar summoned Adalbero, who was at the centre of the intrigue, to appear before an assembly at Compiègne in 985. This, however, was broken up by Hugh Capet. Henry of Bavaria then relinquished his claims to the German throne, and in 986 Lothar died.

Lothar's son Louis, already crowned during his father's lifetime in 979, succeeded to both the kingdom and his father's policies. He summoned the incorrigible Adalbero before another assembly at Compiègne, but died suddenly in 987 just before it met. The assembly took place anyway, but, overshadowed by the question of who the next king should be, it was a confused affair. The nearest Carolingian claimant to the throne was Charles 'of Lorraine', Lothar's brother and duke of northern Lotharingia. As with many of his relatives and contemporaries, his career had been punctuated with shifts of allegiance. He had supported Otto II against his brother Lothar when the latter tried to seize parts of Lotharingia, but had then moved over to support Lothar against the infant Otto III. This made Charles a highly undesirable candidate to Adalbero, who saw Hugh Capet as the more suitable successor to Louis V. Adalbero was probably instrumental in engineering Hugh's election at an assembly at Senlis, and Hugh was then crowned in July 987.

Although with hindsight this marked an irreversible dynastic shift, much about the beginning of Hugh Capet's reign seemed traditional. He was the fourth of his family to occupy the French throne. Like Lothar he had his son Robert crowned in his own lifetime, and like Lothar and Louis V he had to contend with a powerful rival, for it was not until 991 that he contrived to have Charles of Lorraine captured.

What do contemporary and near-contemporary writers have to say about all this? For the most part, they did not see Hugh's election as especially controversial. Raoul Glaber, the Cluniac monk, wrote in the 1040s:

> After the deaths of King Lothar and King Louis, the government of France fell upon Hugh, son of Hugh the Great, duke of Paris . . . and brother of the illustrious Henry, duke of Burgundy. The great men of the whole realm gathered for the crowning of Hugh as king. He was, as we have seen, a blood relation of the kings of Germany through Otto I. Having taken on the government of the French kingdom, Hugh soon found his authority ignored by men who had shortly before all submitted to him; but thanks to his vigour of body and spirit he at length put down all the rebels.[27]

Richer, a monk of Saint-Remi at Reims writing in the 990s (Source 1.1), gives an almost blow-by-blow account of the assembly at Senlis which decided for Hugh. Into the mouth of Adalbero he puts a speech clearly modelled on

Sallust's style of writing. He makes Adalbero condemn the next Carolingian claimant, Charles 'of Lorraine', for a lack of honour, for being more loyal to German than French interests, and for contracting a *mésalliance* by marrying the daughter of a mere vassal. The throne should not necessarily pass to the next blood relation of the late king, but should pass to a man of nobility and vigour: 'Choose prosperity rather than disaster for the realm. If you wish misfortune upon it, then elevate Charles to the throne; if you wish it to be blessed, then crown the distinguished duke Hugh as king'. Adalbero carried the assembly, and Hugh was elected, crowned and recognised as king by the Gauls, Bretons, Normans, Aquitanians, Goths, Spanish and Gascons. Richer portrays him as issuing decrees and legislating according to royal custom, surrounded by the great men of the realm.[28]

The value of Richer's work as a source is admittedly dubious. While he may well have witnessed some of the events, and was certainly contemporary to them, he was very strongly biased by his admiration of Gerbert of Aurillac, the archbishop of Reims when Richer wrote, and of classical historiography, which Richer was trying to imitate. The speech of Adalbero has all the hallmarks of fiction and is clearly intended for dramatic effect.

SOURCE 1.1 RICHER OF REIMS, *HISTORIES*

In the year 998, a monk named Richer added his final jottings to a parchment manuscript that is now preserved in the German city of Bamberg. This manuscript contains the only copy of Richer's four-book history of the French kings, a text that has fascinated and sometimes infuriated historians since its rediscovery in 1833. As a monk in the important city of Reims, and as an associate of the archbishop Gerbert, Richer was very well-placed to observe and record the history of the kingdom. He also included a few passages of more personal history, recording anecdotes about his father, a soldier who had been involved in the siege of Laon, and about himself too, for instance his journey to Chartres in search of medical texts.

It seems, however, that Richer was more interested in history as a literary exercise than in factual details or analysis. Study of his autograph manuscript shows how he reworked his text, erasing some passages and adding others, to sharpen its rhetorical effect rather than to improve its accuracy or insight. He was greatly influenced by ancient Roman historians such as Sallust and Livy and sought to describe events of his own day as they would have done. This means that Richer's history, though often our only source for the period it covers, cannot always be wholly relied upon as a guide to events. It nevertheless offers an unparalleled insight into the attitudes to the past of a tenth-century writer.

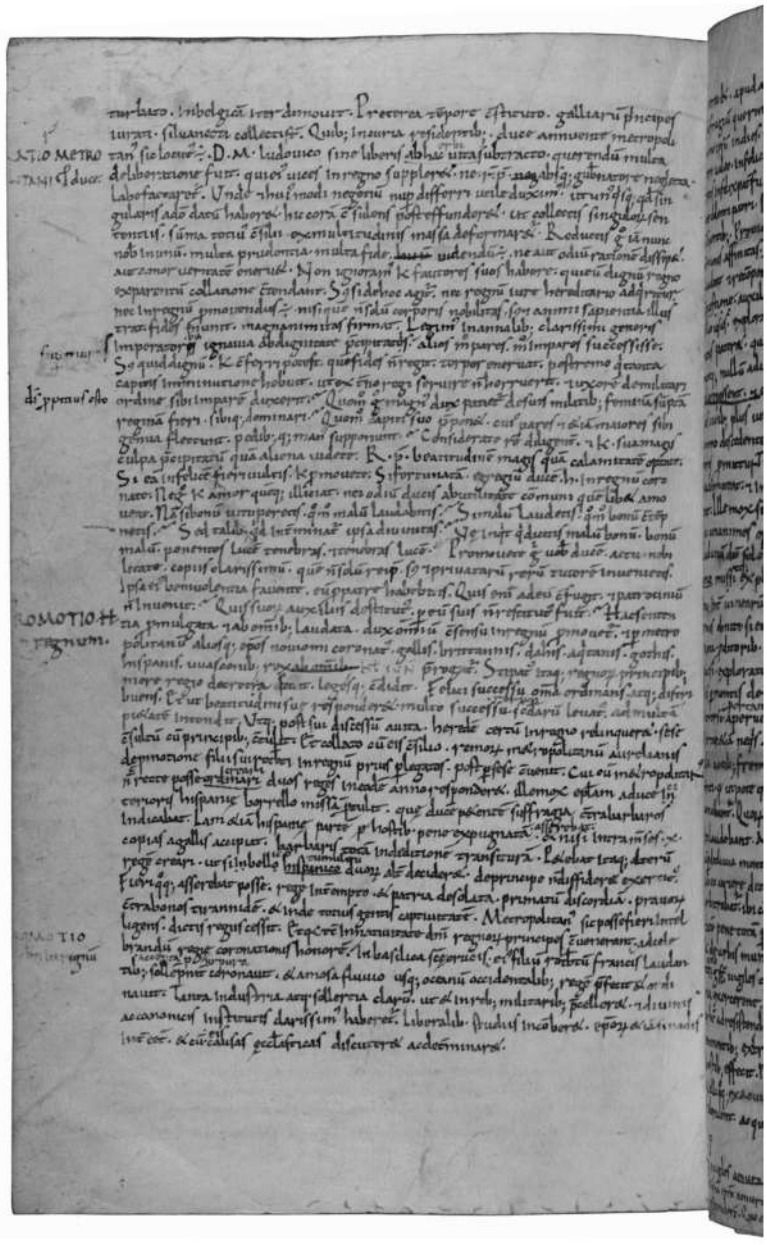

IMAGE 1.5 Page from the Histories of Richer of Reims

Staatsbibliothek Bamberg Msc. Hist. 5, f.43v, image © CC-BY-SA 4.0 reproduced with permission of Staatsbibliothek Bamberg

Yet the influence Adalbero is depicted as wielding, and some of the arguments he used, may not be far from the truth. His role as an intriguer-extraordinary is revealed in the letters which he and Gerbert wrote to the German court in the 980s. Nor did he stop after Hugh's election, as revealed by a letter written by Gerbert on his behalf to Charles of Lorraine, presenting Adalbero's excuses for Hugh's election:

> For who was I that I alone should set a king over the French? These affairs are public matters, not private. You think I hate the royal family [i.e., the Carolingians]; I call my redeemer to witness that I do not hate it.[29]

In their attempts to hedge their bets, do Adalbero and Gerbert protest too much?

These sources, limited though they may be in one sense, are nevertheless enlightening for the considerations affecting the election of a French king. In many ways the same factors that were important in 888 were still so in 987; blood ties with the Carolingians conferred considerable status, but that line had failed, apart from the unsuitable Charles of Lorraine.

Hugh Capet's connections with the Ottonians through his mother, pointed out inaccurately by Glaber, may have helped him to some extent; but what was set above blood in 987 was what Glaber called vigour of body and spirit, and Richer, speaking via Adalbero, nobility and vigour. Adalbero and Gerbert, from within their web of intrigue, would probably have seen this quality more as acceptability, although power also had much to do with it.

In this respect, we can see a difference between Hugh's election and those of his ancestors. Odo had been elected king to lead armies against the Viking invaders, and Robert and Raoul because of the weakness of Charles the Simple. The intrigues of the lay and ecclesiastical magnates surrounding them surely played an important part; but interests beyond those of northern France may have been taken into account, even though royal influence in these areas was already shrinking.

With Hugh Capet's election, the question of interests and regional and local connections become much clearer. Hugh was elected because he was more acceptable to the northern French magnates than was Charles of Lorraine, whose preoccupations appeared to lie principally outside the French kingdom, and who seemed also to threaten the interests and designs of a group of powerful nobles and ecclesiastics headed by Adalbero. In other words, the candidate chosen as king in the immediate circumstances of 987 was the one most favoured by the weighty and influential coalition whose continuing support he needed in order to consolidate his position. The sources highlight this localised intrigue, which was symptomatic of the decline of central authority in France, and of the changed attitude of both the kings and magnates to the royal power.

Hugh was recognised as king by the Bretons, Normans and the others, but like his immediate predecessors his real powers in the outer fringes of France were minimal, showing a marked decline from the already shrinking ones of a century before – a trend which was to continue into the eleventh century. Areas such as

Aquitaine and Gascony continued to acknowledge that they formed part of the *regnum Francorum*, the kingdom of the Franks, and, indeed, never denied royal overlordship. This was later to prove a great advantage to the monarchy when it was imposing royal authority in outlying areas. But who was king was of relatively little moment in the many areas where the royal authority of the early Capetians was scarcely felt.

In the areas centred on the Paris basin, the middle reaches of the Seine and Loire and into Picardy, often described by contemporaries as *Francia*, royal authority was more immediate. But here too, as in the great counties and duchies, centrifugal forces appeared to be at work, and power was becoming increasingly fragmented. Although Hugh Capet held far more lands here in person than had the last Carolingians, the sum total of these was less than those which his ancestors the Robertians had controlled. Kingship, as well as power, was becoming localised.

So was 987 the beginning of a new era? In terms of a continuous period of rule by a single dynasty it proved to be; but because of the prevailing social fragmentation and the limited field of effective action of the monarchy, the change was of very little importance in large portions of France. When the events of 888–987 are considered, with the alternation of the Carolingians and the Robertians, the accession of another member of the latter family, the fourth to occupy the throne, seems less remarkable – indeed viewed from a long-term perspective it is rather less striking than the choice of Odo as king in 888. That Hugh and his direct descendants rapidly established an exclusive claim to the royal office and succeeded in retaining it is perhaps more remarkable.

Otherwise little had changed apart from the royal dynasty. The Capetian king enjoyed the same sacral status as his Carolingian predecessors, he had the same alliance with the clergy and was involved in the same shifting pattern of wars and truces with the great nobles. He held slightly increased domain lands in the same area, *Francia*, centred on Orléans and the Paris basin. But the decline of royal influence and the fragmentation of political authority, already well under way in 987, continued inexorably into the eleventh century.

Notes

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8 M. Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon, 2nd edn (London, 1962).

9 K. F. Werner, *Naissance de la noblesse. L'essor des élites politiques en Europe* (Paris, 1998).
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16 C. Wickham, 'The "Feudal Revolution": Comment', *Past and Present*, clv (1997) 196–208, esp. 202.
17 R. Fossier, *Enfance de l'Europe x^e–xii^e siècles, aspects économiques et sociales* (Paris, 1982), part 2. See now also C. Wickham, *Medieval Europe* (New Haven, 2016), for an emphasis on cellularisation in medieval European history more generally.
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26 F. Lot, *Études sur le règne de Hugues Capet et la fin du x^e siècle* (Paris, 1903), 304–50. See also D. Barthelémy, *Nouvelle Histoire des Capétiens, 987–1214* (Paris, 2012).
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2

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

A regional view

Introduction

Local societies in the French kingdom

French society in the early Capetian period used to be seen as a clearly defined 'feudal hierarchy'. But more recently, a wealth of regional and local studies of French society and politics in the Middle Ages has radically changed our perceptions of medieval France. Social structures are now seen as variable and complex rather than as simply hierarchical, and there has been an emphasis on the role of regional and local rulers – the princes, counts and castellans – counterbalancing the earlier more centralist perspectives.

It is now clear that although in northern France ties of personal commendation (vassalage) and the fief appeared quite frequently from the eleventh century, they were not the only basis on which French society functioned. In many areas the tie of vassalage was little more than a provisional treaty to be broken at will, and this was equally true of the castellans' relationship with the princes and that of the princes with the king. Effective power was often held by the semi-autonomous castellan whose ties with his overlord were tenuous.

In two regions, Normandy and Flanders, however, an effective political hierarchy was established to a significant extent, and in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries it was gradually imposed in other regions by belligerence against the nobles on the part of the princes, helped by the development of administrative institutions and by the declining economic position of many bannal lords (pp. 174–175). Homage, and particularly liege homage, assumed greater importance and gradually more formal hierarchies emerged. These developments were greatly to help the Capetian kings when they began to reassert royal authority more widely from the twelfth century.

Nor is French society now so often depicted only from a central viewpoint. It is instead seen as a number of regions and localities containing a diversity of social structures, varying according to the way in which power was transmitted and to the extent disintegration or decentralisation had reached. At one end of the spectrum is Berry, where by the tenth century public authority had disappeared almost completely. Clearly the isolation of this area from the remaining heartlands of royal power may have been an important factor there, but in Picardy, where society remained equally fragmented until the later twelfth century, the very proximity of the monarchy produced conditions similar to Berry. Maine, Anjou and Poitou-Aquitaine saw less disintegration, but political crises in the eleventh century allowed the widespread abuse of 'feudal' institutions here, which became a force for disorder, at least from the perspective of the church.

At the other extreme are Normandy and Flanders, where public powers and political authority rested for the most part at the level of the prince. But this was not maintained without strenuous effort on the part of the ruling dynasties. Personalities and power of leadership as well as propitious political circumstances all played their part here. The rulers of these two regions managed generally to resist the forces of disintegration at times of crisis; to maintain authority over most of the castles, counts and castellans in their lands; and to use bonds of personal fidelity and grants of land to reinforce their authority. Even here, however, centrifugal forces were at work and immediately showed during times of weakness at the centre.

In the southern regions of France, public power remained strong in theory, but in reality the princes there preserved some degree of authority only by making *convenientiae*, alliances with the lesser nobles, and relying on the peace of God and a rigid social structure to maintain their predominance. Castles appeared in great numbers in this region as well as in many others, the emergence of fortifications independently of the ruler constituting a clear sign of weak central authority, while conversely the power to occupy or confiscate the castle of a rebellious vassal was a sign of strength. To control its strong places was to dominate an area, and the wars of the princes against the nobles in their lands were intended to rebuild this power as the basis of a revived authority.

The frontiers between the areas dominated by neighbouring princes were not at all well-defined and often were constituted by a broad buffer-zone or march in which the central princely authority was undermined by the strength of marcher-lords with shifting or divided loyalties, able to play off neighbouring princes to their own advantage. An example is the Vexin, the contested zone between Normandy and the royal heartland, and repeatedly the scene of both military and diplomatic confrontation between the powerful and autonomous dukes of Normandy and the Capetian kings.

The political importance of these marches meant that there was a tendency for the periphery to become the centre, as for example the Carolingian Breton march, which gave rise to the counties of Nantes and Rennes, the seats of power of the

dukes of Brittany, and Anjou, the heartland of the counts who would rule 'Greater Anjou' and much more besides.

The princes in eleventh- and twelfth-century France

Many regional and local studies have also highlighted the political and social significance of the princes – a term used seldom by contemporaries but frequently by historians to describe the most powerful of the dukes and counts who dominated substantial parts of France, and whose territories are usually referred to as principalities. In the world of these princes, character and ability were key to the holding of power: the successful prince could become a man of great standing, while obscurity awaited the prince who failed.

Aggrandisement could be achieved by the kind of leader who had the ability to fight ruthlessly and to conclude effective alliances in a politically complex society. Fulk Nerra of Anjou, Odo II of Blois and William the Conqueror of Normandy were all of this character; and against them the Capetian kings appeared weak and ineffectual. Yet the grand schemes of these princes were formed within the preconceptions and rules of their own society. As the kings did, they would frequently divide their lands between their sons, bowing to custom or political necessity. In particular they tended to grant their patrimonies to their eldest sons and acquisitions to cadets.

While this could be done through *pariage* – that is to say through joint holding – and although lands often reverted to or were seized by the senior line, that does not argue for a conscious empire-building policy on the part of the princes. Rather it suggests a wish to consolidate their own positions and to build up the power and prestige of the whole family, to follow accepted customs rather than resisting them. Authority, wealth, aggrandisement they wanted, but this was sought, and gained, with personal and family interests at heart.

Moreover, the princes were acting within the framework of the French kingdom. By the eleventh century the Capetians were in firm possession of the throne, and no other family succeeded in rivalling them as they had rivalled the late Carolingians. The counts of Blois-Champagne perhaps attempted to do so: one, Odo II, is said to have asserted that he did not want to be king, just always the king's master (p. 45). But if that was his genuine intention, the effort failed.

Admittedly, despite his high office the king in the mid-eleventh century was in practical terms very much one of the princes, acting alternatively as their opponent or ally. The princes rendered the king military service and homage or fidelity not on a regular basis, but as expediency dictated and as a sign of alliance. They even fought against the king, and occasionally, as in 1031, on behalf of a rival claimant to the throne.

Yet they never tried to dispute the existence of his office, and even when ignoring their king they did not deny his theoretical powers (p. 83); indeed, the princes tended to pay the monarch the greatest compliment by imitating him in many different ways, adopting the ceremonial and vocabulary of royal powers. As Koziol has pointed out, the political culture of early Capetian France was founded

on mutual respect and support for royal and princely rights and privileges alike.[1] Since ducal authority carried a greater status than comital power, and was closely associated with royal power (after all, the dukes of the ninth century had effectively acted as sub-kings), the more powerful counts, such as the rulers of Brittany and Normandy, liked to be titled as dukes too. They were described in their charters as princes ruling by the grace of God, just as the Capetians were kings by the grace of God; they had their own fiscs and forests, and there were bishoprics and monasteries over which they claimed regalian rights.

As lords of their lands they had the duties of defending and protecting them, the right to levy service and the obligation to keep the peace. Like the Capetians they designated their heirs in their own lifetimes – indeed this was probably a noble rather than a royal custom in origin. They were invested as princes, and each had his own household, entourage and administrators. The only significant difference was the royal title conferred by crowning and unction, giving the royal office a sacral and special dimension, and this the princes did not have.

In the twelfth century the king's suzerainty became more effective, but expediency still governed his links with the princes, who continued to render homage and service, even if more frequently, still fundamentally as a mark of alliance (pp. 218–220). The major shift in the balance between the two did not take place until the reign of Philip Augustus, and stemmed largely from his defeat of King John of England, a territorial prince in France on the grand scale. And the principalities, even when brought under a closer royal control in the thirteenth century, retained their own customs, laws and traditions. All this emphasises the continuing divisions within the French kingdom, divisions which were most visible in the eleventh century but which continued throughout the Middle Ages and beyond.

The following discussion of individual principalities shows the range of political and social developments which took place in the French kingdom from the ninth to the twelfth century. Burgundy and the Mâconnais are examples of a principality and a county that experienced a high level of disintegration or political decentralisation, and Normandy of a duchy held together by the power and authority of its rulers, eclipsing the French monarchy in its political importance. The lands of Blois-Champagne fall somewhere between the two: their princes wielded effective power, but their possessions lacked political or territorial coherence. All these areas are looked at in some detail. Other regions and principalities – Flanders, Picardy, Brittany, Greater Anjou and Aquitaine – are given a more outline treatment, which covers only their general development and political importance, but the society of the south, and the two important principalities of Toulouse and Barcelona are again described more fully as a contrast with the north.

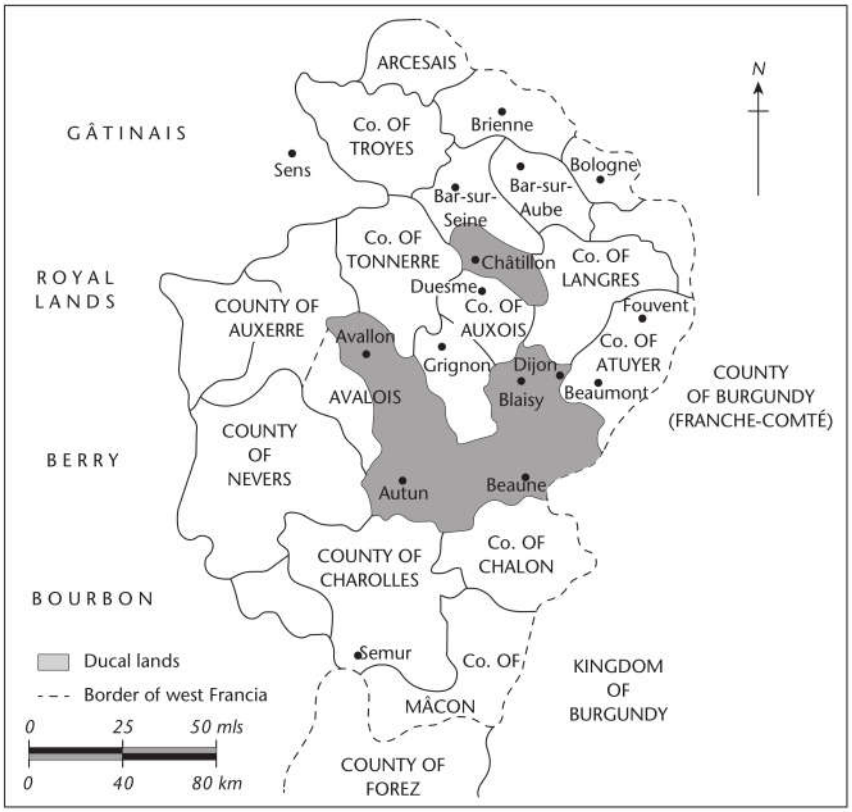
The principalities: north

The duchy of Burgundy

The duchy of Burgundy evolved from a part of one of the sub-kingdoms of the Carolingian empire to a nascent territorial principality in the tenth century, in a

transition marked by considerable violence, as Steven Robbie has shown.[2] A fragile principality from its inception, it followed the classic pattern of internal political disintegration during the eleventh century, and the gradual consolidation of ducal power during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which makes it a useful case study.

Richard the Justiciar accumulated royal powers in the region at the end of the ninth century at a time of considerable political disruption, and was titled as the duke of Burgundy as a consequence, but he did not wield these powers over the whole of the earlier sub-kingdom. A substantial portion of it became a kingdom in its own right, though in the political orbit of the eastern Frankish kingdom (which in 1032 swallowed it up); and the county of Burgundy, also known later as Franche Comté, was likewise detached from the duchy. Richard the Justiciar ruled the lands around Autun, Sens, Nevers and Auxerre, all in west Francia (Map 2.1). During the tenth century, however, Richard's successors lost a certain amount of the authority he had built up, perhaps in part because a marriage alliance with the Robertians involved them in intrigues over the French throne. The counties on the edge of their duchy, such as Dijon, Mâcon and Langres, moved out of their direct sphere of influence.



MAP 2.1 The duchy of Burgundy in the mid-eleventh century

When Duke Henry I died in 1002 he left no direct heirs. He designated as his successor Odo-William, count of Mâcon, son of Gerberga his wife and of King Adalbert of Lombardy. Odo-William had a considerable following among the nobility of the region, but King Robert the Pious claimed Burgundy for himself as Henry's nephew, and backed this up with violent action. He invaded the duchy, taking Auxerre and Avallon, and in 1005 Odo-William and his son-in-law, Landri count of Nevers, submitted to the king. But Bishop Bruno of Langres and certain nobles continued to oppose the king until 1015–16 when Robert took Sens and Dijon. The king now gave Burgundy to his son Henry, who was not, however, able to retain it when he in turn took the throne in 1031. Instead he handed Burgundy over to his brother Robert in 1032: Robert had attempted, unsuccessfully, to seize the throne from Henry and the duchy was probably the price for Robert's acceptance that Henry was king (p. 92).

The succession of wars had done much to constrain the practical authority of both the duke and the counts, and in the late tenth century and the early years of the Capetian dukes, 1002–78, the principality of Burgundy was a shallowly rooted institution. The lands controlled directly by the dukes comprised in theory the *pagi* delegated to counts and vicars, but were in practice very limited indeed, despite considerable efforts on the part of the dukes to conserve and extend them. Duke Robert I held lands around Avallon, Autun, Beaune, Blaisy and Châtillon. He lost control of Auxerre altogether, although he took part of the Dijonnais. He emerges from the sources as a violent man, a pillager of churches, and a murderer of his relatives. The later years of his rule were beset with difficulties, as were also those of his grandson and successor, Hugh I.

Although the ducal institutions, the courts, the administrators, the idea of the delegated public power, survived in some areas, their significance diminished rapidly, so that by the 1070s ducal authority, never strong, was merely theoretical in most of French Burgundy. The nobles whose lands ringed the ducal holdings, such as the counts of Troyes, Chalon and Mâcon (Map 2.1), were in practice independent from the duke. If they accepted that they were subordinated at all, it was in the course of negotiations akin to peace treaties rather than as proclamations of obedience. Meanwhile the great ecclesiastical estates, previously a mainstay of ducal power, were also beginning to go their own ways. The bishops of Autun built up an important lordship, and as the ecclesiastical reform movement gathered impetus many monastic lands slipped away from ducal control. Furthermore, the lands of monasteries of the new orders such as the Cistercians (pp. 181–182) had especially extensive judicial privileges, giving them an autonomous status.

Just as ducal power in Burgundy was constrained by independently minded counts, so comital power was challenged by the growth of bannal lordships. Independent castles, their centres, began to spring up in the late tenth and eleventh centuries. Certain of the castellans were granted or took over comital and vicarial titles, giving them a degree of outward legitimacy, but in some areas these patterns of organisation broke down altogether: the castellanies were based on entirely new centres and the castellans took new titles. For example, the tenth-century county

of Atuyer was divided in the eleventh century between the self-styled counts of Beaumont and Fouvent. Later these castellans gave up using the comital title, and were simply known as the lords of Beaumont and Fouvent. Such men, of whom there were a considerable number, appear to have rendered homage spasmodically to the dukes, to major counts and to one another, but there was no resulting hierarchy of power; first, because of the criss-cross pattern of the ties and, second, because of the large number of allodial holdings which gave many nobles an independent power base. Thus there were many ties of vassalage but few fiefs.

This process of fragmentation is described in Duby's study of the Mâconnais region, which proved a seminal work in French local history studies, and whose methods and approach have been widely followed; his arguments about the pace of change around the year 1000 are now often criticised, but the outlines of his presentation remain compelling.[3] Plentiful sources (mainly ecclesiastical cartularies) are extant for this area from the eleventh and twelfth centuries; and these enabled Duby to trace in some depth the series of changes which first transformed a ninth-century Carolingian county into a series of castellanies, and then led to the revival of comital power in the later twelfth century.

By the year 980 the influence of the duke of Burgundy in this area was inconsequential, but the count of Mâcon retained some vestiges of his former powers: authority over the estates of the cathedral of Saint-Vincent at Mâcon and some lands of the abbey of Cluny, and his public powers, delegated to *vicarii* who still attended his councils and courts. In the early eleventh century, however, his authority diminished rapidly so that by about 1030 the great churches and castellans had become in effect independent. Cluny was increasingly prestigious, and with Tournus and Saint-Vincent at Mâcon profited from grants of immunity from secular authority. Pursuing these to the full, they set up their own courts, forming bannal lordships.

The peace of God, organised by the church in this area, only served further to diminish the count's moral and judicial authority. Gradually the nobles ceased to behave as the count's officials and acted in a private capacity, taking certain formerly public powers and making them customary. As their authority crystallised, they no longer attended the count's court, nor did they render him military service regularly; and he in his turn did little to resist these trends.

By the mid-eleventh century a network of private franchises had emerged in the Mâconnais, strengthened by the large numbers of allodial holdings here. Cohesion between the castellanies was loose, based only on ties of personal commendation, which in the early eleventh century were very much like private contracts or treaties of alliance. Later they came to be connected with the holding of land, and by 1070 were almost invariably associated with it. Homage could, however, be sworn to several lords by one individual. The counts tried to gain the support and obedience of a number of castellans by granting them fiefs, but succeeded in dominating very few, and merely alienated their own lands.

On the whole, ties of commendation and loyalty were for the upper ranks of Mâconnais society, where central control had entirely disappeared and bonds were

inextricably criss-crossed, an instrument of independence. On the next level of society they were more effective as an instrument of control, since the castellans probably exercised some degree of authority over their own clientèles of lesser nobles and knights. Here too, however, the plurality of ties and the many allodial holdings still gave the knights, a separate group but closely linked to the nobility, considerable independence.

The years 1110–60 marked a period of increasing social stability in the Mâconnais, when a more hierarchical pattern of relationships emerged based on the castellany, which reached its apogee. The fragmentation of power had stopped, and the great bannal lords, lay and ecclesiastical, had established a firm control over their localities, and over the middling nobles, the rising group of knights and the peasantry. Operating *de facto* on the same level as the count of Mâcon, these men, such as the lords of Beaujeu, had wide-ranging and important connections and indulged in politics outside Burgundy.

Meanwhile a commercial revival was taking place, manifesting itself in the appearance of groups of wealthy burgesses, a wider circulation of money and an increasing taste for luxury goods. This seems to have contributed in its turn to an upheaval in society which began in the late twelfth century, with a resulting impoverishment of many of the great lay families and monasteries, but the enrichment of a few at the top. The distinction between fiefs and allods began to fade away, as homage began to be sold, often to wealthy burgesses and peasants. A relatively clear hierarchy of vassals was now established, while economic and legal factors modified the way in which land was held, organising many non-noble and non-military landholders into a tenurial pyramid. The old nobility and knights were regarded as an aristocracy of lineage rather than wealth, and these changed conditions allowed comital, ducal and royal power gradually to increase, as the region's elites became more integrated.

Not all of the fragments of the duchy of Burgundy followed the same pattern as the Mâconnais. The county of Auxerre, adjoining the royal principality to the west, experienced more intervention from the Capetian kings, but most conspicuously became an episcopal seigneury, with the counts subordinated to the bishops, and episcopal authority limiting the extent of fragmentation. Similarly in the counties of Autun and Langres, which were on the borders of Burgundy and Champagne, the counts performed homage to the bishops.[4]

From the late eleventh century, ducal power began slowly to consolidate in Burgundy. The dukes had maintained ties with the Capetian kings, rendering them homage and military service on occasions; and their own vassals had at times in turn paid homage to them. And as with the king in the kingdom, the duke's authority in Burgundy, long recognised in theory, began to find more traction in practice: for instance, in 1078 and 1106 the duke's vassals from across Burgundy attended assemblies at which peacekeeping and judicial issues were discussed. More practically, the dukes tried to adapt the reality of local castellan rule to their own ends. During the twelfth century they managed to strengthen or rebuild the obligations of vassalage of the castellans towards them, using the idea of liege homage

to create a centralised system and to allow the dukes access to the seigneurial castles – much of this backed up with violent campaigns. They were helped in their efforts because although most of the lords had important allodial holdings, the castles themselves were often built on lands held as fiefs.

When such conditions did not exist, the dukes attempted to draw the castellans into their dependence by granting them new fiefs. The peace and truce of God had helped to keep alive the idea of public order in the eleventh century, and the dukes, while they had lost control over much church land, were still patrons and advocates of some important abbeys in the region. As patrons of Cluny, for example, they were connected with one of the most influential spiritual forces of their time.

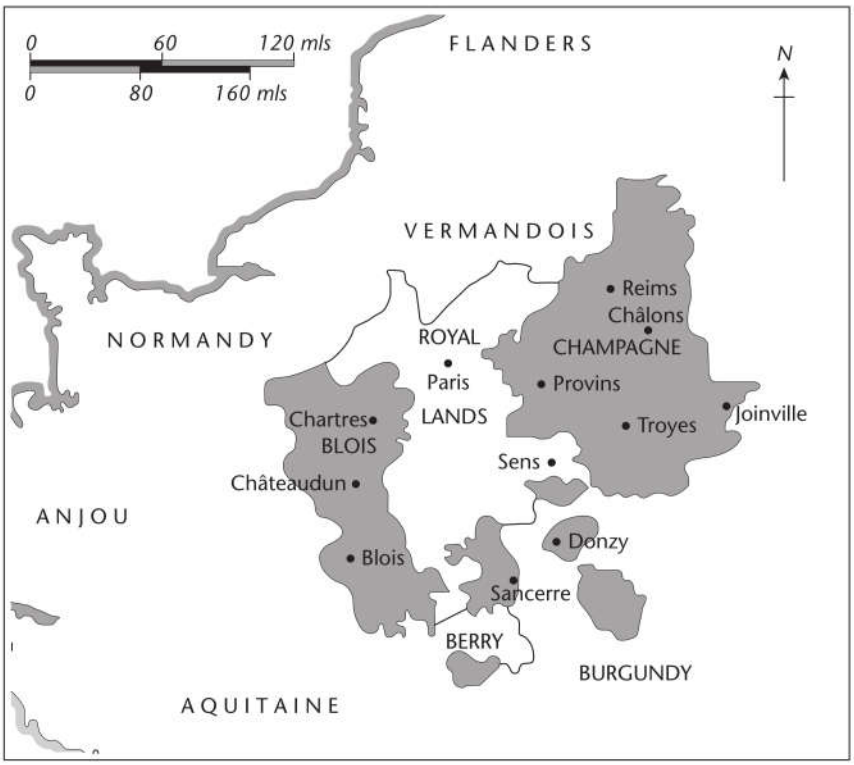
During the twelfth century, too, local ducal administrators again began to appear, and by gradually taking over some of the powers of the castellans they began slowly to reduce their authority and independence at the local level. Nevertheless, warfare was the most crucial aspect of the slow climb of the dukes to power in the changed circumstances of the twelfth century, and many of the changes outlined above were imposed only after successful military campaigns.

Meanwhile the dukes were building up their own lands in the duchy as a power base. In the later eleventh century parts of Auxerrois and Duesmois were annexed to the ducal holdings. Odo II (1143–62) concentrated mainly on dominating the ecclesiastical estates, bringing the disruptive bishop of Langres to heel. His successor Hugh III gained by marriage the nearby county of Albon in the empire; this gave him a powerful position as the vassal of both French and German kings, and he appeared to be taking an independent political line. King Philip Augustus, alarmed by this, invaded the duchy in 1186 in defence of the lord of Vergy, who, feeling himself victimised by the duke's wish to seize his lands, had conveniently commended himself directly to the king (p. 219). Hugh III was defeated and the duchy came more closely under royal influence.

The lands of Blois-Champagne

The lands of the counts of Blois and Troyes almost encircled the royal principality, and the power of this family was a considerable and longstanding challenge for the Capetians. Nevertheless, the counts did not carve out a clear and well defined principality until the late eleventh century, due in considerable measure to the influence of the kings, who tried as far as possible to contain their dangerous rivals, using neighbouring princes to help them.

In his study of Champagne, Bur questioned whether its counts were really territorial princes at all, for their lands lacked a set of local customs, territorial definition and historical traditions, and their family had no genealogies devoted to them, no monastic burial house and little of the other panoply of the other eleventh-century princes. But he concludes that, despite these important missing features, in practical terms the counts exercised the same kind of powers as the other princes: peace-keeping functions, their own domains, a group of counties in



MAP 2.2 The lands of Blois-Champagne in the later twelfth century

their feudal *mouvance* or dependence, clientèles of lesser nobles and knights, and, above all, their capacity to wage wars and conclude negotiations with neighbouring magnates and the king.[5]

The dearth of any chronicles and contemporary genealogies relating to the counts means that on the whole they remain shadowy figures; charter evidence is the keystone of research into the counties of Blois and Troyes. The latter territory, together with areas to its south, came increasingly to be described as Champagne from the eleventh century onwards, although the designation was unofficial until the thirteenth century. The dual principality began to form in the tenth century as the central areas of the duchy of Francia (p. 5) disintegrated politically; the only firm boundary to remain was that of the archbishopric of Reims.

In the tenth century Herbert II, count of Vermandois, descended from the Carolingians, and his son Herbert 'the Old' began to collect lands together, but after Herbert the Old's death in 980–4 his lands were divided. His nephews Herbert 'the Young' and Odo I took the most important lands and rights; Herbert, already count of Meaux and Troyes, received Épernay and the Perthois, and Odo the county of Omois together with control of the county of Reims and the abbey of Saint-Médard at Soissons. Odo was already count of Blois, Tours, Châteaudun and

Chartres, which he had inherited from his father Theobald the Trickster. The area round Saint-Quentin went to Albert, count of Vermandois, Herbert's brother. Meanwhile on the fringes of these shifting blocs of domination, independent castellanies were springing up around important fortresses: examples from the diocese of Reims are Porcien, Rethel, Roucy and Oulchy.

In the eleventh century the fortunes of the house of Blois-Troyes began to rise. Its history illustrates both the problems and the advantages of the state builders of the period. Allied by blood and marriage to almost all the important families of northern France, this family inherited a number of important lands and often held on to them, if necessary by force. But it also suffered from its proximity to the Capetians, who were anxious not to be crushed between the two parts of the holding and were liable to approve or even insist on their partition between heirs, a practice which seems to have become customary. On the other hand the connections of the various parts seem to have been maintained, so that when one branch of the family failed the other inherited its possessions. And even though their lands lacked a strong territorial base, a city or a county as their centre, for much of the eleventh century, the counts were still able to wield a considerable degree of power and influence in this period, based on their domain and their followers (Figure 2.1).

Odo II, count of Blois, helped by the strong if intermittent attachment of King Robert the Pious to his mother, Bertha (pp. 88–89), began to assemble a conglomeration of lands. He seems to have been a remarkable but also a rash and reckless man, with his sights set, in his later years, on the kingdom of Burgundy. In 1004 he added the Champagne possessions around Reims and Provins to his existing holdings of Blois, Tours, Chartres and Vendôme, and then, as claims to other lands emerged, he used them to the full. His first wife Matilda, sister of Duke Richard II of Normandy, had brought as a dowry part of the town of Dreux and the surrounding area. After her death her brother claimed it back and defeated Odo in battle, but the king, while giving Tillières to Richard, allowed Odo to retain Dreux.

This was just a beginning. In 1021 Stephen count of Troyes and Meaux died without heirs. As a relative, Odo was clearly in the running for his lands, although it is not clear how well founded his claims were. If back in 943 his predecessor Count Herbert II had divided the lands in *pariage*, as the chronicler Raoul Glaber can be read as implying, Odo's rights were strong; however Bur suggested that Herbert II's lands had been straightforwardly divided.[6] In any case the king was a rival claimant, and this matter caused a major rift between the two men. Odo settled the matter by invading the counties of Troyes and Meaux, and the king reluctantly invested him with these lands, but the count soon caused further trouble by attacking the lands of his new neighbour, the duke of Lorraine. This angered the Emperor Henry II, and when in 1023 he met King Robert the Pious at Mouzon, near the border between their lands, they together formally condemned Odo.

Odo's lands may have been judged forfeit; certainly he thought they had been, for he took up arms against the king. Refusing to go before the royal court, he had

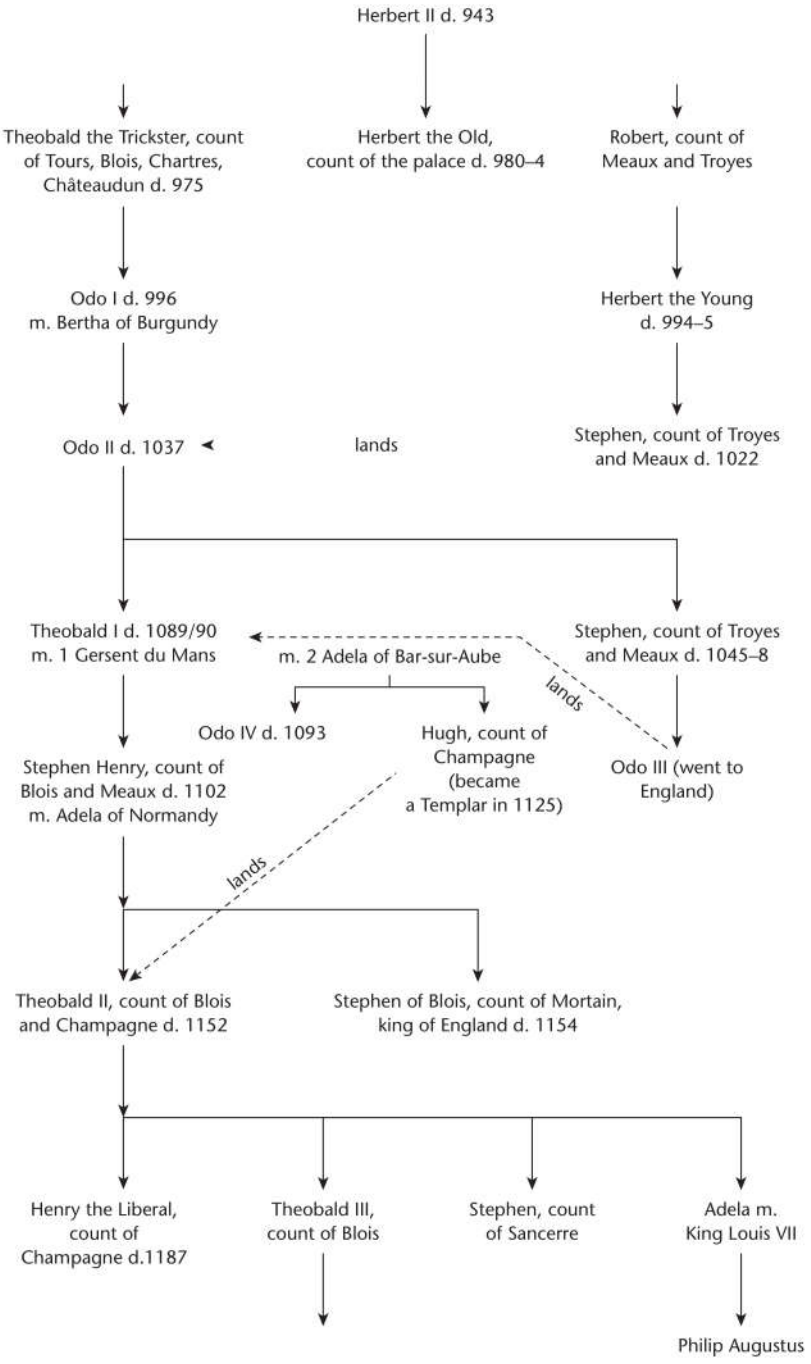


FIGURE 2.1 Outline genealogy of the counts of Champagne

written on his behalf a celebrated letter. Fawtier quoted from it to show that the great nobles never pursued a vendetta against the king since, even when quarrelling with him, they recognised his as the ultimate authority. But the later part of this letter which best illustrates this point may also be viewed as a normal attempt of a vassal to make peace with his lord, in this case the king.

> The discord that you have caused is indeed very troublesome to me, but as for you, my lord, it takes away the root and fruit of your office, that is to say justice and peace. So I humbly beg you, in that clemency to which you are by nature inclined unless you are dissuaded from it by bad advice, now, at last, to stop persecuting me and to let me be reconciled to you.

The tone of the last sentence contrasts strikingly with an earlier passage where Odo boldly states his claims to the lands:

> I am exceedingly astonished that so hastily and without hearing my case you have judged me unworthy to hold a benefice from you. For if it is a question of birth, it is clear that by God's grace I am able to enter on an inheritance. If it is a question of the nature of the benefice you gave me, the fact is that it does not come from your domain, but from the estates which come to me with your consent by hereditary right from my ancestors.[7]

The contemporary German chronicler Wipo alleged that Odo frequently declared 'I don't want to be king, just always the king's master'.[8] This might be seen as an ironic statement, for Odo's ambitions stretched to kingdoms beyond the west Frankish border, and there was nothing to prevent him from coveting the French kingdom too. Or was it the utterance of a territorial prince aware of the realities of political power and more concerned with these than with the royal title? Certainly by the 1030s Odo, palatine count like many of his line, seemed to be in a good position to overshadow Henry I, just as Henry's ancestors had the Carolingians. For in 1027 he succeeded in retaining Troyes and Meaux, and he then moved on to wider schemes. He claimed the kingdom of Burgundy through his mother Bertha of Burgundy, and he even allied briefly with Robert the Pious and with Duke William of Aquitaine against Conrad II, the new emperor, in pursuit of it. But this coalition was unable to agree on concerted action, and Odo was soon at war with the king again.

In 1031, when Robert the Pious died, Queen Constance fell into dispute over her dower lands with her second surviving son, Robert, and Henry I, the eldest surviving brother and his father's designated heir. Drawn in as her supporter, Odo received a considerable sum of money and half of the town of Sens as the price of his aid. But Odo's coalition was defeated by Henry I with the help of Robert the Magnificent, duke of Normandy. However, Odo had meanwhile managed

to build up a substantial clientèle of castellans from within the royal principality, which undermined the king's power there. Then in 1033 he took up arms again in favour of the king's youngest brother Odo, but also still in pursuit of his claim to the kingdom of Burgundy. This had been strengthened when in 1032 King Rudolph, his maternal uncle, had died. Emperor Conrad II and King Henry I of France both stepped in to prevent this claim from being made good, and in 1034 Odo made peace. But when he died in 1037, it was during yet another campaign in Lorraine.

Despite Odo's aggression, the control he exercised over his own diverse lands was not deeply based, and he did not form a cohesive principality in the eastern parts of his possessions. The bishoprics of Reims, Châlons and Meaux were strongly under royal influence. There were many independent lordships in the area, and Troyes was the only town where comital power was strong.

When in 1037 Odo died his eldest son, Theobald I, took the paternal lands of Blois, and his second son, Stephen I, became count of Troyes and Meaux. The latter died between 1045 and 1048 and these lands returned temporarily to the care of Theobald I until the young Odo III came of age. Meanwhile Theobald had lost the Touraine and Vendôme to Geoffrey count of Anjou, who had the backing of the king. Furthermore, in the period 1047–65 new independent castles were appearing in considerable numbers on the borders of Champagne, posing further difficulties for the counts. Then, in the 1050s, Theobald allied with the king, and his power began to build up again. He began to expand southwards from the Troyes lands, and when in 1058–60 his nephew Odo III came of age, the young man paid Theobald homage for them. Thus when Odo went to live in England in the late 1060s, Theobald was able to take back these counties.

A rival to the count of Blois emerged in the 1060s in the shape of Raoul IV of Crépy, count of Valois (pp. 50–51). But when Raoul's son Simon became a monk in 1077 some of the estates of this family, Bar and Vitry, passed to Theobald through his wife, further enhancing his power. Theobald was, indeed, in a commanding position by the end of his rule, and he had also begun to consolidate his power within his bipartite principality, exerting a growing authority over many of the castellans in the county of Blois in particular. He was count of the palace to Philip I, and linked to the king by ties of vassalage, but he nevertheless supported both the Cluniac movement and the papal reformers against royal interests.

A measure of his power is that the king seems to have made a point of insisting that the customary division of his lands take place in 1089–90 when Theobald died, and once again the house of Blois-Champagne was unable to resist. One of Theobald's sons, Odo IV, inherited the county of Troyes, but Stephen-Henry, his brother, was given the county of Meaux to the east of Paris, as well as Blois and Chartres.

In 1093 Odo IV died and was succeeded by another brother, Hugh, who began to push the county of Champagne yet further to the south, basing his authority on Troyes, Épernay, Saint-Florentin and Provins. He married Constance, daughter of King Philip I, bringing him Attigny, and he also managed to dominate

the Argonne. Despite some difficulty in controlling castellans such as the Dampierre, Chappes and Trainel families in the county of Troyes, eventually Hugh succeeded in imposing some degree of authority in the region, as attested by some nearly 50 surviving charters issued in his name. By this time Hugh's power had a firm base, but around 1125, for reasons that remain unclear, he became a Templar monk. Champagne now passed back to the counts of Blois.

Meanwhile, Stephen-Henry, count of Blois and Meaux, appears, like his possessions, to have been governed by his wife Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror, duke of Normandy and king of England. When Stephen-Henry went on crusade in 1096 Adela was officially made his regent, and although he returned from the east with embarrassing rapidity she soon sent him back again. He died in Outremer in 1102.

Theobald II, their young son, became the next count. His power had, like that of his uncle the count of Champagne, an increasingly strong base, and the links of the castellans with the counts were growing. The Broyes and the Roucy were powerful and independent, but they were as much a challenge for the French king as the count of Blois. Theobald II was described by the chronicler of Morigny as being second only to the king in the kingdom. He wielded great political power, and during his long rule as count of Blois and Champagne the eastern parts of his lands in particular became very prosperous.

Like his contemporaries Thierry and Philip counts of Flanders, Theobald gave direct encouragement to the growth of trade in his lands. By grants of privileges and safeguards he diverted merchants travelling between Flanders and the Languedoc away from the episcopal cities of Reims and Orléans to towns under his own control or where he could profit directly. Troyes, Provins, Meaux, Lagny and Bar-sur-Aube all gained custom at the expense of Reims, but also of Paris. Hence Louis VI and Louis VII tried to fix a monopoly on Parisian water traffic, while Reims in reaction joined a trading league with other northern French towns such as Arras, Cambrai and Saint-Quentin.

Largely as a result of its prosperity, Champagne rather than Blois now became the centre of the comital holdings. The authority of the counts, however, seems to have remained based on loyalty and commendation, in the earlier twelfth century not backed up with a developing administration as was the case in Normandy. Indeed, in many ways Champagne in this period shows similarities to territorial principalities in the German empire, for instance in the count's use of ecclesiastical advocacy. Emerging principalities such as Bar-le-Duc and Luxembourg were much closer to Champagne, in the east of France, than were counterparts in the far west. It is this proximity to the Holy Roman Empire that explains why Theobald II chose a German-speaking wife, Matilda of Carinthia, as well as why the counts of Champagne sometimes played the role of intermediary between king and emperor.[9]

In any case, Theobald II's resources were considerable. He controlled the valuable profits of trade, and he held about two-thirds of the castles in Champagne, together with domain lands and rights: Troyes, the Perthois and Épernay regions, Meaux, Coulommiers and Bar-sur-Aube. He was the lay advocate of a number of

important abbeys and overlord of most of the castellans. Indeed the build-up of his authority was helped by changing patterns of landholding, for whereas before 1075 one out of every two parcels of land was allodial, after this date there was a gradual shift in the balance, so that by 1150 one allod was outnumbered by six fiefs. More landed knights also began to appear.

The count was the vassal of the French kings, the emperors and the dukes of Burgundy for various lands, and his successors did not acknowledge the French king as suzerain for all their holdings until 1198. Theobald II thus enjoyed a considerable degree of independence, and he was an important figure in the politics of the French court. In the early part of his reign he was something of a threat to Louis VI, fighting him in the Brie area in 1111–19 and again from 1128 to 1135. Then Henry I, king of England, his uncle, died. Theobald seemed a strong contender for the English throne, for Henry's only direct heir was the Empress Matilda. But he was pre-empted by his brothers Stephen, and Henry, bishop of Winchester, Stephen taking the crown with Henry's support. Theobald gave Stephen some help in his fight against Matilda and her husband Geoffrey of Anjou, but from now on his preoccupations seem to have been more with stimulating the economy of Champagne than with politics.

In 1142–3 he was involved in hostilities with Louis VII, emerging unscathed. Abbot Suger, Louis's principal adviser, favoured détente with Blois-Champagne rather than warfare, and Theobald's later relations with Louis VII tended to be more peaceful. When he died in 1152 his lands were divided. His eldest son, Henry, known as the Liberal for his generosity to the church, took Champagne, but one cadet, Theobald, was given Blois and Chartres and another, Stephen, Sancerre. Henry, however, remained as suzerain of all the lands, and this, as Evergates observes, marks a change from earlier divisions.[10]

Henry was, like his father, a significant figure in French politics. He managed to steer a middle course between Louis VII and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa – who was an active figure in the neighbouring county of Burgundy – over the papal schism in the 1160s, although he generally supported Louis against Henry II of England. He married Mary (Marie de France), daughter of Louis VII and Eleanor of Aquitaine, while Louis VII took as his second wife Adela, Henry's sister – a sign of his power and influence. Within Champagne Henry now built on his predecessors' achievements to create a comital administration in the form of *prévôts* and later *baillis* set over the castellanies on the model of the royal lands. In addition, he enforced his military and fiscal rights, organised and regulated commerce and granted numerous franchises to urban and rural communities.

Henry also established Troyes as the central place of his rule, endowing it with a grand palace (Image 2.1), inspired perhaps by the great new palatine complex in the kingdom of Sicily. The centrepiece was his lavish new comital 'chapel' of Saint-Étienne, magnificently decorated and hosting an important relic collection including St Thomas Becket's ring and fragments of his clothing. Considerably larger than the city's cathedral, the chapel was staffed by canons who also assisted with the county's administration.

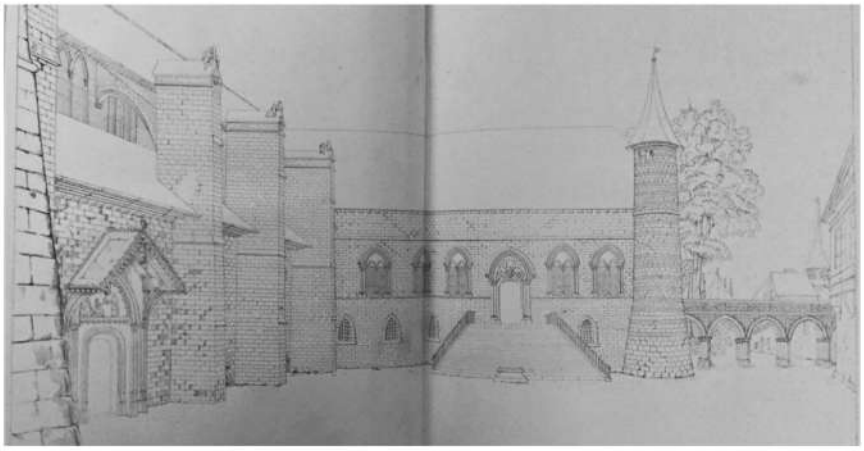


IMAGE 2.1 Count Henry the Liberal's palace and chapel at Troyes, engraved in 1837

From A. F. Arnaud, *Voyage archéologique et pittoresque dans le Département de l'Aube* (Troyes 1837), opposite 27

Having taken part in the Second Crusade as a young man, Henry took the cross for a second time in 1177, leaving his wife Mary to rule Champagne in his absence. He returned in 1181, only to die shortly after his arrival back in Troyes, where he was buried near the high altar of his great chapel in a sumptuous metalwork tomb that he had prepared several years previously.[11]

He was succeeded by Count Henry II, another enthusiastic crusader who was king of Jerusalem from 1192 until his premature death in 1197, during which time Mary again governed the principality. Henry II's younger brother, Theobald III, was the next count, but died in 1201, leaving his wife, Blanche of Navarre, to act as regent for the infant Theobald IV, born after his father's death. After a colourful career in French politics, including a major role in the Albigensian Crusade, Theobald IV eventually became king of Navarre in 1234, relinquishing suzerainty over Champagne to the French king (p. 326). Fifty years later, in 1284, Joan of Navarre, heiress to Champagne, was to marry the future King Philip IV, and the independent existence of Champagne soon came to an end.

Flanders and Picardy

Flanders was the only French principality, apart from Normandy, where the transfer of power to leaders below the level of the prince only occurred in a limited way and was reversed with relative ease. Unlike Normandy it was not a stable geographical unit, but well into the fourteenth century comprised the changing lands dominated by its counts.

Flanders began as an independent principality when in 862 Baldwin I abducted Judith, daughter of King Charles the Bald, and Charles, although initially reluctant

to favour him, later granted him the *pagus* of Flanders. For most of the tenth century this was an important polity in northern France, and after a temporary setback to comital power at the end of the tenth century during Baldwin IV's minority, the counts began to expand east into German lands and south into Hainault. Baldwin V (1035–67) married Adela, daughter of King Robert the Pious of France, and from 1060 to 1067 the count of Flanders acted as guardian to his young nephew, Philip I of France.

In 1070, however, when Baldwin VI died, his brother Robert the Frisian tried to seize his lands from Arnulf, his legitimate heir, and their mother the Countess Richilda. Both sides called on King Philip I for support and Richilda was initially successful in gaining it. Philip I defeated Robert the Frisian at the battle of Cassel in 1071, but Arnulf was killed, and Robert was given the county. Richilda presented her own lands of Hainault to her next son Baldwin. Robert the Frisian's two successors were generally allies of the king and both died fighting for him. Meanwhile towns such as Arras, Ghent and Ypres in the northern part of the county were becoming increasingly prosperous from the profits of the burgeoning cloth trade, which expanded with the encouragement of the counts.

Another crisis erupted in 1127 when Count Charles the Good (1119–27) was murdered by a group of disaffected nobles while at mass in Bruges. Louis VI immediately went to Flanders and in his presence William Clito, son of the imprisoned Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, but grandson too of Matilda of Flanders, was elected as the next count of Flanders. A violent civil war ensued, graphically described by the chronicler Galbert of Bruges. A group of towns rejected William Clito as count and chose Thierry of Alsace instead. William was defeated and killed in battle and Louis VI had no option but to recognise his rival (p. 147).

Thierry and his successor Philip of Alsace (1128–91) managed to gain control over the urban communities by imposing law and order on them, but also by encouraging their economic growth by making grants of valuable privileges. These counts also brought the castellans to heel, carrying out what amounted to a purge in the north of the county, strengthened their powers and developed a sophisticated administration. The *Gros Brief* of 1187, an account roll of the count's domain, reveals an effective financial machine and also highlights the wealth of the Flemish counts in the twelfth century.

In Picardy, lying to the south of Flanders, political power devolved straight to the castellans, and despite attempts by various nobles to form principalities in the region, these always foundered on the opposition of the kings whose lands lay directly to the south. The nearest approximation to a principality which emerged here was in the lands built up by Raoul IV of Crépy, count of Valois, from 1055 onwards. His family, descended from the Carolingians, was firmly implanted in the area at the end of the tenth century. Raoul was already count of Bar-sur-Aube by marriage when in 1063 he added Amiens and the Vexin by inheritance. He also held the lordship of Montdidier. These areas were key to the domination of this part of northern France. However, Simon, his heir, saw the Vexin overrun by Philip I of France, and in 1077 he became a monk, leaving sisters to inherit.

His estates were divided between his relatives, and the shortlived proto-principality was no longer a challenge either to the kings, or the counts of Blois.

Fossier argued that the crown played a very significant role in this region, helping to organise its society in the thirteenth century but also preventing political power from cohering in the eleventh. Picardy was, he says, with the lle de France

> the only part of the kingdom from which the king was never absent from the age of the invasions to the modern period. The permanence of his control over the clergy and the aristocracy, the visits or the campaigns he made, the ties of family or of interest established with the counts of Ponthieu, Vermandois, Soissons and many other lords, did more to maintain his presence than his castle at Montreuil or his rights over Corbie and Saint-Riquier. The development of an important territorial principality in Picardy was prevented mainly by the king's fear of a threat to his possessions on the Oise or the Aisne.[12]

This aspect of the development of Picardy was unique. Although there are many similarities between it and the Mâconnais, the evolution of their social structures took place under different circumstances. In the Mâconnais there was a power vacuum; in Picardy royal power was strong enough to prevent a principality from forming, and consequently allowed the development of castellanies. But the Capetians did not become strong enough to bring Picardy under their direct domination until the late twelfth century.

The duchy of Normandy

As befits the most dynamic and powerful French principality of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, Normandy's history and development have been extensively studied. The duchy was based on a Viking settlement in the lower Seine region, whose rulers expanded their powers by conquest and colonisation. This nascent principality was given recognition by the west Frankish kings when in 911 Charles the Simple invested Rollo the Viking leader with upper Normandy at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte; and in 924 lands which consisted of the Bessin and the Hiémois were at least nominally handed over on behalf of King Raoul. In 933 the same king ceded the Avranchin and Cotentin. Links with their homelands were maintained by the Normans well into the eleventh century, but Normandy also developed strong resemblances to the neighbouring French principalities. By the end of William the Conqueror's rule in 1087 it had become a strong and for its time a well-controlled polity with a clear territorial definition in comparison with its neighbours.

How far can this relative unity and centralisation be traced back? Does it mark a continuing Frankish structure of government in the province of Neustria, or is it a creation of the Vikings? In *Normandy before 1066*, Bates argued for continuity, and in this he has been followed by most scholars. He identified four flexible and

MAP 2.3 Normandy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries

overlapping stages of development of the Norman dukedom. In the first, from 911 to *c.*960, there was Scandinavian immigration on a large scale in the face of Frankish hostility; the second, from *c.*960–*c.*1025, was a period of consolidation in which the counts of Rouen gained strength both from links with Scandinavia and from 'absorption in the Frankish environment', with the adoption of characteristically Frankish language, social structure, government and ecclesiastical institutions.

The third stage, *c.*1025–*c.*1050, saw the end of the Scandinavian connection, and during the minority of Duke William II (the Conqueror), a weakening of ducal authority comparable with that occurring in other territorial principalities in the preceding decades. The final stage, up to and beyond 1066, was characterised by the recovery of ducal authority fuelled by 'a policy of sustained aggression' against the duchy's neighbours.[13] The position attained by the dukes during the period *c.*960–*c.*1025 evidently enabled ducal authority to survive the perils of William II's minority. Bates sees the factors which enabled the dukes to continue to dominate the Norman aristocracy as being the continuity of the *pagi*; the consequent absence of bannal lordship and lay advocacy of churches; and a clear distinction between nobility and knighthood, which rendered the nobility a unified elite centred on the ducal dynasty.

This 'continuity paradigm' was challenged by Searle, who argued that the survival, or even prior existence, of Carolingian institutions in the region has been overemphasised, and that the basis of ducal power was not public authority but kinship: the Norman aristocracy was a 'warrior kin-group' on Scandinavian lines. In a helpful review of this historiographical debate, Potts added the refinement that continuity or discontinuity may be contingent upon the level of society under consideration, so that 'discontinuity at the upper levels of society did not mean discontinuity at the lower levels'.[14]

There is some evidence that during the tenth century certain Frankish elements continued to exist within the Norman duchy: the chronicler Flodoard, for example, mentions the cession of a group of *pagi* to the Vikings, implying that these administrative units still survived,[15] and until the early eleventh century the Norman 'dukes' tended to style themselves as princes, marquesses or counts, in effect super-counts. Not until the eleventh century did other counts appear in Normandy, and these were at first invariably ducal relatives.

This is very much the style of a Carolingian count, albeit an atypical one, but was there a real structure of government to match? There is not sufficient evidence conclusively to answer this question, but in the areas devastated by war, it is unlikely that the Carolingian administrative system survived. In other parts of the principality it may well have done so, and have provided the basis for rebuilding political organisation.

The church in the duchy, like its administrative institutions, suffered a period of eclipse in the earlier tenth century, but later on re-emerged, perhaps strengthening Frankish traditions as it did so. Seven out of the eight monasteries flourishing in Normandy in the first quarter of the eleventh century were Merovingian foundations, suggesting a high degree of continuity. The boundaries of the ecclesiastical

province of Rouen corresponded fairly closely with Normandy itself, although the inclusion under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of the French Vexin, strategically a vitally important area between the lands of the Norman dukes and the kings of France, was to cause political difficulties. The dukes exercised a tight control over the Norman church. They took considerable initiative in reconstructing it, founding and refounding monasteries, and nominating bishops.

The early dukes of Normandy were powerful men and great achievers, and they passed down their lands undivided. Rollo's estates went to William Longsword, who augmented them, and his assassination in 942 brought about the succession of his son Richard I. Writing around the year 1000, Dudo of Saint-Quentin suggested that these dukes, like Richard II of whom he had more first-hand knowledge, had been designated as heirs to the duchy in their fathers' lifetimes, with the magnates' consent, and that where appropriate younger brothers had paid homage to them for any apanages (portions of land allocated to support family members).[16] This happened again in the case of Richard III; however, when Richard died mysteriously in 1027, his brother Robert 'the Magnificent', known alternatively as 'the Devil', seized the dukedom and sent Richard's son Nicholas to a monastery. On Robert's own death in 1035 William, his illegitimate son and designated heir, was to succeed him.[17]

The Norman polity, styled in some charters as a duchy from the early eleventh century, and as a *regnum* from the late 1020s, was treated as indivisible, and it was also deemed by a strong Norman tradition to be an allod, entirely independent from the French king. Norman chroniclers, from Dudo of Saint-Quentin in the early eleventh century to Robert of Torigny in the mid-twelfth century, emphasised that the grant of 911 had not implied any subordination of the duke. The French kings' view was however that the Norman rulers were, like the rest of the territorial princes, royal vassals, and they also refused officially to recognise their ducal status up to 1204, referring to them in royal diplomas as counts. But in practice the Normans had a privileged position; until 1060 any homage rendered was done on the borders of 'France' and Normandy, suggesting a treaty of peace rather than an oath of submission.

After 1066 the dukes, now kings of England, do not seem to have done homage at all. This is probably explained in part by the theory that no king could do homage, as well as by traditions of Norman independence, but it does not seem to imply that Normandy and England were seen by William as an indivisible unit, for whilst he failed to pay homage to the French king for the duchy, William still rendered him military service. This was done sporadically, but it fits in well with the behaviour of the other princes.

Normandy in the eleventh century was in relative terms a well-controlled principality, but it is a mistake to exaggerate the power of the dukes and to ignore the clear signs of political dislocations similar to those which affected the other princes. There were signs of the decay of ducal authority under Robert the Magnificent, who alienated a considerable amount of land and was unable to curb many of his vassals. As previously noted, in the minority of William the Conqueror, Robert's

illegitimate son, who succeeded in 1035, disruptive forces began to manifest themselves even more strongly.

In many areas, because of weakness at the centre, new patterns of organisation developed and power devolved to nobles such as the viscounts of the Bessin and the Cotentin. Private castles began to appear, bringing with them challenges to traditional forms of law and order, not least in the form of private wars. On the borders the lordship of Bellême, an independent and troublesome seigneury, was consolidated; so too were L'Aigle and Echauffour. Yet, as Bates has argued, these problems reflected the difficulties of minority rule as much as a fundamental threat to the dukedom, and in 1047 King Henry I of France helped William to defeat and crush the most dangerous insurgents at the battle of Val-ès-Dunes.

William subsequently married Matilda, daughter of Baldwin V count of Flanders, in about 1052. He thus gained a valuable ally, but he also faced papal censure since he and Matilda were apparently related within the prohibited degrees. Moreover, King Henry I now turned against William in alliance with the powerful Geoffrey Martel of Anjou. In 1054 they staged an invasion of Normandy in support of the count of Arques and other nobles who were hostile to William. The duke defeated one army at Mortemer in 1054, and in 1058 cut off and massacred the rearguard of a royal force at Varaville, but little was decided until 1060 when both the king and Geoffrey of Anjou died.

William's rise to power from 1060 was spectacular and rapid. He used external aggression as a means of uniting the Norman nobility, internal consolidation of ducal power running in parallel with external conquests. First he invaded and conquered Maine, long dominated by Anjou, in 1062, obtaining the overlordship for a time. This was effected on the grounds of the betrothal of his son Robert to Margaret, infant sister of count Herbert of Maine, who had died in 1062 promising William the succession. The count of Ponthieu was also forced to pay the duke homage; and the Vexin, held by Count Walter but claimed by William, was harried by the Norman duke. Then in 1064 William invaded Brittany, building up a powerful opposition within it to Count Conan II and a following for himself. The death of Conan in December 1066 was to remove another important rival of William; but in the meantime the duke of Normandy had invaded England.

William arrived in England in the autumn of 1066 with a great host of Norman, Flemish and Breton nobles and knights, probably with papal approval. His defeat of Harold at Hastings owed a great deal to good fortune, but in his subjugation of England he left little to chance, using and adapting the existing sophisticated and centralised administrative system of the kingdom to back up a power initially well established by force. The vast majority of the Anglo-Saxon nobles were dispossessed and their lands were granted to William's followers, most of whom were Normans. Thus many important cross-channel estates were built up and close links of family, tenure and patronage joined the kingdom and the duchy. The Norman church provided many bishops and abbots for England and Norman monasteries built up valuable lands in the kingdom. The two polities continued to share their ruler apart from during the years 1087–96, 1100–6 and 1144–54, and some of the

ties between them survived for several decades the capture of the duchy by the French king in 1204 (pp. 163–165).

The conquest of England was part of a far wider movement which took soldiers and settlers from the duchy into southern Europe and the Middle East. A Norman tradition held that in about 1018 a group of Norman pilgrims on the way home from Palestine went to the shrine of Saint Michael at Monte Gargano in Italy, and by playing off the Lombards and Greeks, they had by the middle of the eleventh century succeeded in establishing strong power bases at Aversa and Melfi. They were soon drawn into the complex politics of the area, an involvement which they turned to their own advantage, and used to build up states in Apulia and Calabria under the leadership of the Hauteville family and Richard of Aversa.

By the late 1090s Count Roger I the Great, a Hauteville, dominated Apulia, Calabria and Sicily; and he laid the foundations of the Norman kingdom of Sicily. Meanwhile his relative Bohémond had taken a leading role in the first crusade and in 1100, having founded a new Christian state in the east, was invested as prince of Antioch. He was described graphically by the Byzantine princess Anna Comnena as a man of cunning and arrogance, with a certain charm but considerable savageness and greed, and above all emanating strength and power: 'even his laugh sounded like a threat to others'.[18] Other Norman nobles were somewhat less ruthless politically, but equally enthusiastic crusaders. Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, pledged his duchy to his brother William Rufus to enable him to go to the East, and, despite his military prowess, eventually lost Normandy to him altogether.

As a result of their conquests, the Normans played an important role in the secular and ecclesiastical politics of western Europe and its relations with the Byzantine empire and the Muslim powers. Closely allied with the papacy, the Normans promoted an increasing intransigence in the western church towards the Greek church as well as towards Islam, the latter stemming from an enthusiasm for the idea of holy war. Their achievements can easily be overrated and overstated, for like most of their contemporaries they were struggling for wealth and power – but they were often successful in getting them. Certainly in comparison with many contemporary groups they possessed administrative and political skills, effective military techniques, and a flourishing and tightly controlled church. Their architectural style was strong and innovative, and appears in their castles, such as the White Tower in London, and in their churches, from Durham cathedral to Monreale. An example is the now-ruined Benedictine abbey of Jumièges in Normandy (Image 2.2). These are the visual reminders of the interchange of ideas between the different areas under Norman domination.

In Normandy itself William gradually re-imposed law and order and rebuilt on the institutions of his predecessors. Some of this he achieved before 1060, but the process seems to have been greatly expedited after this date. He had introduced the peace of God probably before 1047, and this proved a highly effective way of reinforcing ducal peace; later private wars were forbidden by Norman custom. Although ties of fidelity and grants of land were used as instruments of rule

IMAGE 2.2 Ruins of the Norman Romanesque abbey of Jumièges, completed *c.*1067

Photo © E. Hallam

in Normandy before the 1060s, they were not set within the kind of relatively ordered and hierarchical structure which was to grow up in England after 1066 and also to spread in post-conquest Normandy. That was to evolve with the growth of ducal authority which was manifested in a number of ways.

The dukes maintained the right to confiscate the lands and rights of the nobility, although only when they rebelled, for their estates seem to have been regarded as hereditary. Following the insurgence of William, count of Arques, for example, the lands of one of his associates, Roger of Mortemer, were forfeit: the castle at Mortemer and valuable estates were granted to William of Warenne by the duke. Furthermore, William the Conqueror insisted on receiving the homage of the vassals of his vassals, maintaining a position as liege lord. In 1080 at the council of Lillebonne he required the great nobles and ecclesiastics to recognise that they were obliged to bring their disputes to the ducal court.

Military service was also levied effectively by the duke, the greater nobles and the ecclesiastical estates gradually becoming liable for a fixed number of knights in the later part of William's rule. High justice was either kept by William himself or granted out to the great nobles under his surveillance. And the duke exercised considerable authority over the Norman church, introducing many of the disciplinary aspects of the papal reforms without relinquishing any of his own powers. He also encouraged the growth of the Norman towns, founding urban centres (*bourgs*) and stimulating trade.

William's power in his French principality was greater by far than that of any of his contemporaries in France. He was violent and brutal, dominating, politically astute, charismatic and terrifying, entirely convinced of his right to the kingdom of England.[19] As an Anglo-Saxon chronicler put it, he was

> a very wise man, and very powerful and more worshipful and stronger than any predecessor of his had been. He was gentle to the good men who loved God, and stern beyond all measure to those people who resisted his will.[20]

The Norman chroniclers William of Jumièges and William of Poitiers give far more partisan accounts: for example, the first, writing in the early 1070s, describes the duke as the wisest and most gracious king, a keeper of peace and dispenser of justice. Both, like the Bayeux tapestry, the celebrated embroidered narrative of the conquest of England, emphasise the personal power and strength of William: all portray him as a remarkable figure (Image 2.3 and Figure 2.2).

William the Conqueror died in 1087. While his lands were in dispute between Robert Curthose and William Rufus, much of the authority he had built up in the ducal office dissipated. In Normandy private castles multiplied and confused political

IMAGE 2.3 Duke William in 1066 as depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry, embroidered probably in the 1070s

From an engraving published in 1823, prior to its restoration, by Charles Stothart, *Vetusta Monumenta*, vi, Society of Antiquaries (London, 1885), plate 8

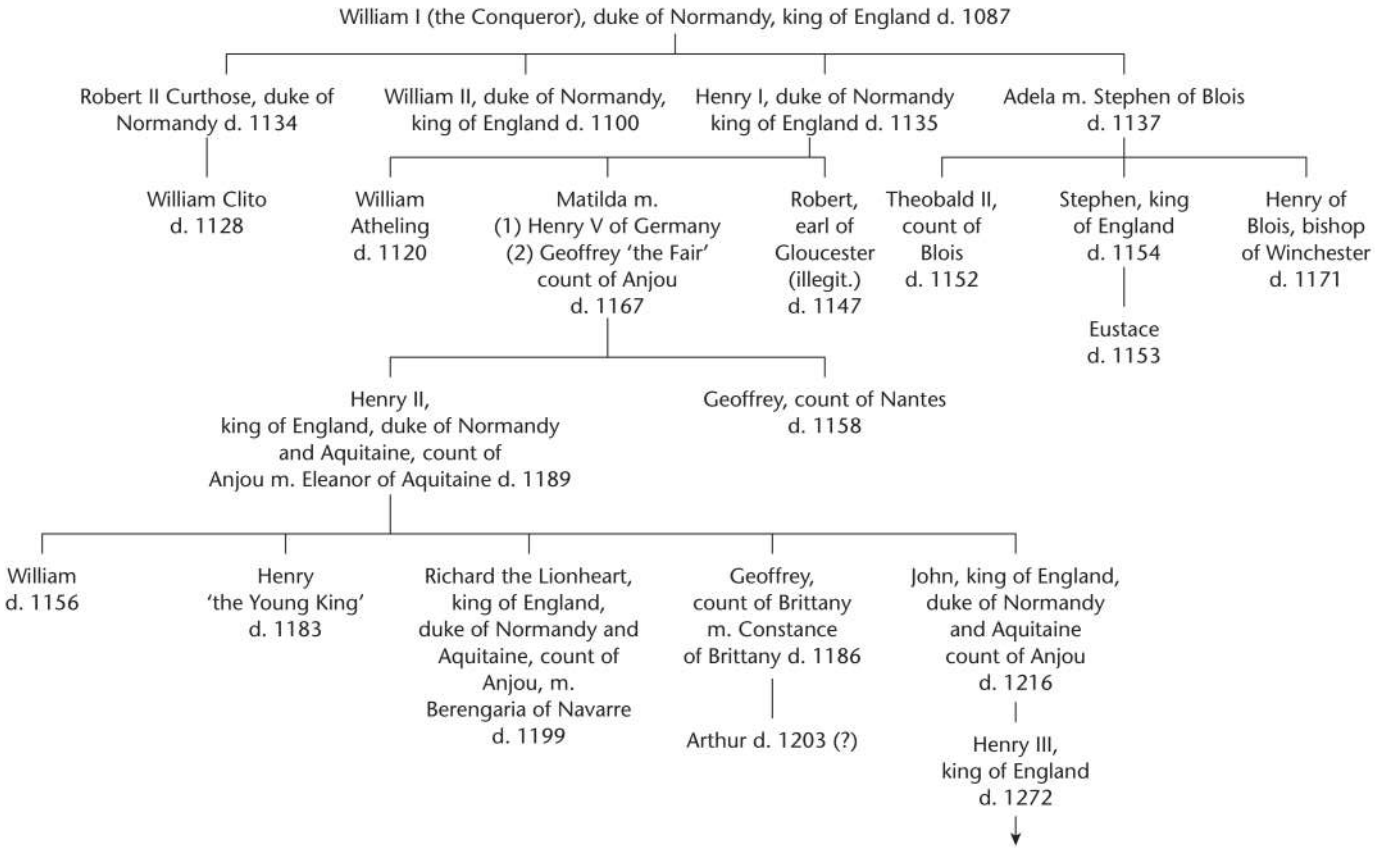


FIGURE 2.2 Outline genealogy of the Anglo-Norman royal house

conditions developed. This breakdown of central authority illustrates and highlights one major problem confronting the successful territorial prince of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that of succession. Despite the attempts of Philip I of France to stir his sons to rebellion and perhaps even to separate England and Normandy, William had succeeded in holding together his lands. In many ways he might have preferred that England and Normandy should be inherited by one son – perhaps William Rufus since Robert Curthose, the eldest, was, it is said, disliked by and consistently disloyal to his father. Because of the cross-channel estates and the interests built up by the Norman nobility and church this would have been a popular outcome.

Many historians have suggested that this was originally intended by William but that events eventually forced a compromise on him, whereby Robert would inherit Normandy, the patrimony, and William, England, the acquisition. The question of whether the division was forced on William is not readily resolved, but the partition which in the end resulted was it seems quite in keeping with Norman noble inheritance customs and also with those in much of northern France.[21] Be this as it may, William's eldest son Robert was ousted as duke of Normandy by both his brothers, first by William Rufus and then by Henry I, both of whom were also kings of England.

When William Rufus took possession of England he met with considerable opposition from much of the Anglo-Norman baronage: Robert, anxious to take England, attempted to invade but had the tables turned on him by William, who managed both to hold down his kingdom and to establish himself in the duchy. He then helped Robert to rebuild his power in Normandy and Maine and the brothers agreed that if one died the other should inherit all his lands; neither was married at the time. But they soon fell out again and William Rufus seemed on the verge of taking over Normandy when Robert departed on crusade in 1096, having pawned the duchy to him for 10,000 marks. William therefore remained as duke until his death in 1100, finding it would seem the time and energy in the late 1090s further to embellish his father's great ducal centre at Caen, symbolic of his authority (Source 2.1).

SOURCE 2.1 THE GREAT HALL (*ÉCHIQUIER*) AT CAEN, C.1095–9

Duke William I of Normandy developed Caen into an important centre of ducal power, with a market, castle and two abbeys, which would be the burial-places of the duke-king and his wife Matilda of Flanders. His successors continued to support the city. One of the most striking and high-status ducal buildings from this time is the massive Romanesque '*échiquier*', the great hall in the castle, long thought to have been built in the twelfth century. This underwent many subsequent alterations, and parts of it have been reconstructed after suffering severe damage in the Second World War.

But much of its original fabric has survived; and Impey has dated it to the late eleventh century. This is evidenced by its stylistic features; for example, its geometric decoration includes chevrons of a type that is typical of Anglo-Norman buildings of the time. Moreover its design – probably originally a single storey with an impressive single span roof – links it with Westminster Hall, *c.*1095–9. It may have been begun shortly after Westminster at the behest of William Rufus, duke of Normandy and king of England, to mirror his vast royal showpiece and to affirm his kingly status within his Norman duchy.[22]

IMAGE 2.4 The great hall (*échiquier*) at Caen

Photo © E. Hallam

Shortly after Rufus's death, Robert returned and took his lands back. He was not required to repay his debt, but he was unable to establish himself in England, despite considerable support, because of his own dilatory behaviour and the determination of his younger brother Henry I. Robert invaded England in 1101 but Henry easily bought off his claims to the kingdom with the lure of a substantial pension. Robert furthermore released Henry from the homage he had done for certain lands in Normandy if he gave them all up to him save Domfront – but Henry does not seem to have abandoned his larger claims to the duchy.

It is not clear if Henry gave his lands in Normandy back to Robert as promised, and his intention of seizing Normandy became increasingly apparent. This he did by building up support and by fighting his brother, whom he defeated in 1106 at the battle of Tinchebray. He dispossessed both Robert, whom he held captive until

his death in 1134, and Robert's son William Clito, born in 1102. This prince was to die in battle in 1128, trying to hold on to the county of Flanders with which Louis VI had invested him (p. 147).

The succession arrangements originally envisaged for the lands of William the Conqueror, whether they had in fact involved partition or not, had thus been utterly overturned, and Henry, the youngest son, initially cut off by William the Conqueror with nothing more than a cash payment (albeit substantial), had ended up by seizing all his father's lands. Louis VI protested and campaigned against Henry, but against this powerful and determined opponent he was almost entirely ineffective.

Henry managed to reimpose order in Normandy quite rapidly; he crushed Robert's supporters and those nobles who might have been dangerous for other reasons, such as Robert of Bellême and William of Mortain. Henry ruled 'with royal power' in both parts of his lands, acting as king in Normandy as well as in England. The royal title gave him considerable status and he used it as a reason for not rendering homage to Louis VI, putting himself in a very strong position *vis-à-vis* the king of France. Normandy's position within France was in practice that of a powerful and autonomous principality. Its links with the monarchy were tenuous and its ruler, imperial in his pretensions, was funded by his hugely wealthy kingdom across the channel and backed up by a ruling élite with lands and a stake in both, utterly overshadowing his French suzerain.[23]

Many historians have emphasised the links of the duchy with England to such an extent that the two are often seen as the 'Anglo-Norman realm'.[24] This is a convenient term, but what does it mean, and does it tie in with contemporary usage? Certainly the term *regnum* was often used in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries to refer to principalities as well as to kingdoms. It was applied frequently to Normandy both before and after 1066; it was applied to England, and it could be applied loosely to both England and Normandy together, to describe the lands ruled by Henry I.

But it would be far-fetched to infer from this that England and Normandy formed a single *kingdom*. It is true that the two were linked closely by ties of family, tenure and patronage throughout their long if interrupted association. And the title of king of England was often used in the formal diplomas of Henry I for Normandy either to replace the title of duke or in conjunction with it. The Warenne chronicler even went so far as to describe Henry as *rex Normananglorum*, but this is a rare and literary exception.

Overall, the inconsistency of the terminology used in 'official' documents points to a blurring in the distinctions between ducal and royal authority and suggests also that there was no defined notion of an Anglo-Norman kingship. It is also known that Stephen was both crowned in England and invested in Normandy, a demonstration that the two were seen as separate holdings. Then there is the issue of homage to the French king. It is true that no duke-king of Normandy and England seems to have recognised the overlordship of the Capetians in person from about 1060 until 1156; in 1109 Henry I was joined by the dukes of Burgundy

and Aquitaine in openly refusing homage to Louis VI. But an admission by the dukes of Normandy of the theoretical supremacy of the French king was already beginning to emerge.

As well as their sporadic rendering of military service, the duke-kings permitted two successive designated heirs to the duchy, William Aetheling son of Henry I, and Eustace son of Stephen, neither of whom in the event became dukes, to do border homage in 1120 and 1137 respectively. Then in 1151 Henry Plantagenet paid homage for the duchy to Louis VII in Paris, homage he repeated as king of England in 1156. Thus the earlier defiant stance of the Norman kings of England was gradually weakened by the growing legal and political significance of the feudal bond between the French king and the princes (pp. 192–195).

None of this supports the idea that Normandy was seen as attached to England rather than France. For despite the ambiguities surrounding the use of the royal and ducal titles, and despite the strong ties between the kingdom and the duchy, the Anglo-Norman realm as a kingdom exists far more clearly in the minds of modern historians than it did in the consciousness of contemporaries: Henry I ruled with kingly powers in both but he was not king of both. Normandy remained a French principality, albeit the strongest and most independent. It did not split away from the French kingdom and its links with the French king were to strengthen later in the twelfth century.

Henry I proved a strong and able ruler of Normandy who set its administration on a sound footing, and was a dangerous adversary for the Capetian Louis VI – but he too suffered from the problem of finding a suitable heir. His only legitimate son William, to whom he had intended to leave both the kingdom and the duchy, died in a tragic shipwreck in 1120. This left the English king with only one direct legitimate descendant, the Empress Matilda, wife then widow of Henry V of Germany, and a colourful and vigorous character.

Henry I, rather than passing his lands to William Clito, son of Robert Curthose, or to Theobald or Stephen of Blois, also his nephews and the latter a favourite of his, designated Matilda his heiress in 1126–7. Having made his magnates swear to recognise her, he next married her to Geoffrey 'the Fair' Plantagenet, count of Anjou. When Henry died in 1135, Stephen seized the English throne and ousted both Theobald (p. 48) and Matilda. Characteristically, the Empress and her husband fought back with vigour. After a period of civil war in England and Normandy, Geoffrey overran the duchy in 1144, and began to impose order again, a task continued by his son Henry II who dominated the English kingdom along with half of France (pp. 220–226).

The fact that Normandy was the most centralised and ordered territorial principality of this period has attracted scholars since the nineteenth century, appreciative of Normandy's precocious governmental institutions and the relatively abundant records they left behind. Recently, they have looked to the periphery, to the frontiers of Normandy, and found there in the dynastic politics and aspirations of the marcher-lords much of the driving force behind ducal politics and especially relations with the Capetians. Normandy's long and ill-defined southern and eastern

frontiers, especially the Vexin, would prove to be the Achilles heel of the power of the dukes of Normandy when seriously challenged by Philip Augustus in the late twelfth century (pp. 159, 161).

The duchy of Brittany

Brittany was a region with strong traditions of independence, with an ethnic identity, a language and culture of its own. Formal integration into and continued interaction with the Carolingian empire, and with adjacent regions, nevertheless ensured that the political and social institutions of Brittany were similar to those prevailing elsewhere in western Francia. This was especially true of the eastern portion of the medieval duchy (the counties of Rennes and Nantes) which were within the Carolingian Breton march.

Brittany was severely affected by Viking attacks, and when ducal authority was re-established in the 930s (with the first ducal charters surviving from the 940s), it remained fragile. Dynastic disputes caused the political fragmentation of the duchy into counties. Comital authority was in turn diminished by the appearance of adulterine castellanies, which by the mid-twelfth century constituted independent baronies. Comital authority further suffered from the pressures of resisting claims to overlordship pursued by both the dukes of Normandy and the counts of Anjou in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The process of fragmentation was halted and reversed from the mid-eleventh century, when intermarriage among the comital houses resulted in the ducal title vesting in one individual, Duke Alan IV (1084–1112). It remained for the ducal dynasty to revive central authority. The long and stable reigns of Alan IV and his son, Conan III (1112–48), ably assisted by the dowager-duchess Ermengard, daughter of Count Fulk IV of Anjou, saw progress in this direction.

A succession dispute following Conan's death not only undid the dukes' achievement, but also created the circumstances in which the claims to overlordship by neighbouring princes could be fulfilled in the person of Henry II, king of England, duke of Normandy and count of Anjou. Between 1158 and 1166, Henry II annexed Brittany to his continental possessions, marrying his younger son, Geoffrey, to Constance, heiress of the duchy. The Plantagenet régime in Brittany further consolidated important links with the Anglo-Norman kingdom, which began with grants of lands in England to Bretons who had supported William the Conqueror in 1066 and later his son Henry I.[25] The largest bloc of English lands, the honour of Richmond, pertained to the dukes of Brittany by hereditary right after 1146, but other Bretons held English lands in chief of the crown independently of Richmond.

The Plantagenet régime came to an end in 1203, in consequence of King John's murder of his nephew Arthur, the son of Duke Geoffrey and Constance. From that point, Brittany was indisputably subject to Capetian authority, which could now be exercised directly. Brittany had at all times acknowledged Capetian sovereignty – even the Plantagenet rulers had rendered homage for the duchy to the kings of France – but typically of the principalities, this sovereignty was purely nominal until the early thirteenth century. Nevertheless, after the marriage of the

infant heiress, Alice, to Peter of Dreux, a Capetian cadet, in 1213, Brittany was allowed a large measure of autonomy, subject to the continued acknowledgement of Capetian sovereignty, and the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries would see the golden age of ducal Brittany.

Greater Anjou

The county of Anjou, based on the *pagus* of Angers, the eastern part of the Carolingian Breton march, was relatively small. 'Greater Anjou' is a modern expression, referring to the adjacent territories ruled by the counts of Anjou: these were Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Vendôme and Saintonge. Greater Anjou had formed in the tenth century during the second stage of disintegration, when counts Fulk the Good and Geoffrey Greymantle consolidated their power over the *pagus* of Angers and surrounding areas. Fulk Nerra (987–1040) and Geoffrey Martel (1040–60) managed to extend their power by a mixture of belligerence and strategic marriages, taking over Touraine, Vendôme and Saintonge. Their political importance in France and Europe became considerable. The exploits of Fulk, who switched dramatically from war to prayer, are legendary; Geoffrey was a calculating politician who manoeuvred more subtly from ally to ally. Anjou and Touraine were among the lands of the Robertian dukes of Francia whose rights there were inherited by the early Capetian kings.

Although it was more distant from the Ile-de-France than Blois-Champagne, Anjou continued to feel royal influence until the mid-eleventh century. The kings still visited Angers at least until the reign of Henry I and the counts of Anjou readily acknowledged their sovereignty. In a series of studies of Anjou in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Bachrach argued that a factor in the success of the early counts was a self-conscious conservatism, but Bisson has instead insisted on the importance of violence and outright aggression.[26]

In 1060 Geoffrey Martel died, leaving no direct heirs, and a political crisis followed, triggered by the weakness and political maladroitness of the next count, Geoffrey the Bearded. Fulk *le Réchin*, his brother, ousted him with the support of the papacy, which was gained as a result of Geoffrey's dispute with the archbishop of Tours. It took a long while before the resulting breakdown of comital authority could be reversed and independent lordships such as Amboise and Craon brought back under the count's control.

In the twelfth century the lands of the counts of Anjou began to increase rapidly and dramatically. After a shaky start, Count Fulk V gained Maine by marriage and later became king of Jerusalem. His son Geoffrey the Fair (1128–51) – known also as Geoffrey Plantagenet because he wore a sprig of broom (*genista*) in his hat – drew on his father's crusading prestige in his long and hard fight against the castellans, as Kathryn Dutton has shown (Image 2.5). In 1128 Geoffrey also made a splendid match to the Empress Matilda, heiress to England and Normandy.[27]

Despite the disputed succession and the reign of Stephen of Blois in England (1135–54), Henry II, son of Geoffrey and Matilda, succeeded in gaining control of

IMAGE 2.5 High-status enamel tomb-effigy (*gisant*) of Geoffrey Plantagenet, count of Anjou, originally in the cathedral of Saint-Julien at Le Mans. The lions on his shield are an early example of heraldry, and by about 1200 his grandson Richard I, king of England, had adopted three such lions as his royal emblem

© Musées du Mans

England, Normandy and Greater Anjou, and took the duchy of Aquitaine by marriage to Eleanor, its heiress (p. 153). He continued his father's struggles against the castellans in Anjou, reducing them to relative obedience. Geoffrey Plantagenet and Henry II were increasingly occupied outside Greater Anjou, and developed an administration which was able to function in their absence, with comital authority delegated to the seneschal of Anjou and a hierarchy of subordinate officers, some new, such as the seneschal of Le Mans, some derived from the pre-existing comital *prévôts* and *voyers*.[28] The Capetians were ultimately to reap the benefits of these developments after Anjou fell to Philip Augustus in the early thirteenth century (pp. 164–165).

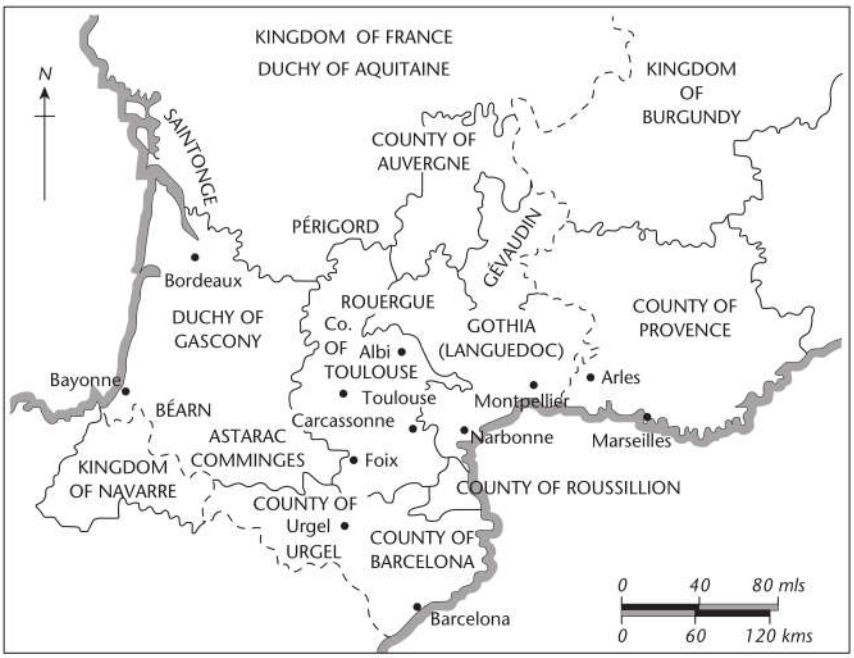
The principalities: south

Southern society

In language, social structure and customs the south of France – Languedoc and the Spanish march and Gascony – showed marked contrasts with the kingdom's northern and central regions. From the tenth to the early thirteenth century the connections of this area, the Midi, with the papacy were stronger than its ties to the French crown. This was to change only after the Albigensian crusade, when different patterns of land-holding and methods of administration were introduced from the north in the wake of the royal conquests.

Yet this was not the first occasion on which an army from the north had brought with it major social and political modifications. In the eighth and early ninth centuries the Carolingian kings had fought their way down into the south, defeating local political leaders in Aquitaine, and wresting part of the northern Iberian peninsula from the control of the Islamic polity of al-Andalus. Gascony and Catalonia were constituted as marcher lordships, and the Carolingian administrative system was also introduced into Languedoc, Provence and Aquitaine. Power was held by counts or markgraves, the majority Frankish, others Gascons or Goths.

During the course of the ninth century, royal authority weakened in this region and by 900 a number of territorial principalities emerge from the sources, as in the north: the duchies of Aquitaine and Gascony, the counties of Toulouse, Carcassonne, Ampurias-Roussillon and the kingdom of Provence (Map 2.4).



MAP 2.4 The principalities of the south in the mid-eleventh century

The last became part of the larger kingdom of Burgundy although its links with the lands to the west remained strong.

However, as in the north, the great families of the area, the descendants of the earlier Carolingian officials, were unable fully to retain their influence. The notion that the delegated powers of administration and justice were public survived in the Languedoc, perhaps due to the influence of Roman law, and so too did the rendability of castles to the count, enabling him to repossess them at will. In the south in general, customs did not take the place of public authority as in much of the north. Yet many of the nobles, while acknowledging the rights of counts and dukes, often took little heed of them in real terms. As a consequence, the region was in the tenth century politically confused. Although the threat of external invasion decreased, castles proliferated as a symbol of local domination and aggression against the immediate neighbours of their holders, much as they did in the north.

The lordships of southern France nevertheless differed from their northern counterparts in a number of ways because of the distinctive social and political conditions here. The frequent appearance of the allod or free holding at all levels of society gave some lords a considerable degree of independence, and officials who made their lands and offices private still had to contend with small, independent allodialists within their lands. Other lands were held as 'free fiefs', subject to limited obligations, perhaps only that of rendering the castle upon the lord's demand.

Meanwhile a new social group, the knights, emerged during the eleventh century. In origin, these southern *milites* were the same as those of Northern France: elite, professional warriors (p. 12). In the south, though, the *milites* did not form a distinct, hereditary social caste and seem even to have eschewed the chivalric culture of rituals and tournaments. They remained an open class of professional warriors; consequently there was considerable variation in the freedom of knights to offer their military services when and to whom they chose, depending upon whether they were household knights, vassals (holding land or money-fiefs), mercenaries, the holders of small allods or magnates possessing extensive allodial lands. Unique to the south was the class of urban knights who would play an important role in the development of towns in the region.

By 1100 a split had emerged in the *laboratores*, those who worked, too. The richer peasants, officials and townsfolk formed a distinct social group between the knights and the lesser peasants, whose status deteriorated as some were brought into more servile conditions. But the wide use of coinage on a local level and the absence of demesne cultivation encouraged the levying of rents rather than labour services by lords, and the burdens imposed on the peasantry generally tended to be lighter than those in the north.

Grants of lands or rights as fiefs were almost unknown in the south. Land tended to be given in exchange for defined rents rather than services, and for a limited period, such as a lifetime, rather than becoming a hereditary holding. Grants of *precaria* of this kind were made most frequently by ecclesiastical landholders, but similar contracts were also occasionally made by lay lords. Benefices, then, were normally granted conditionally and for a limited period; and although occasionally

military service was involved as well as rents, this did not automatically involve an oath of fidelity or the rendering of homage.

Castles were often held as allods but could be granted in part to another family in a form of *pariage* or shared lordship. Military aid was acquired by the making of *convenientiae*, treaties of mutual assistance between nobles involving castle-guard, aid and sometimes pensions. Land colonisation was encouraged by another type of grant, the *medium plantum*, which gave the settler full rights until he had reclaimed the land. It was then divided between him and the allodial holder.

The contrasts between northern and southern France in the three centuries before the Albigensian crusade, then, are striking. As Magnou-Nortier has it, in the south:

> we are in a land where vassalage was unknown, and with it homage, where fidelity, by contrast, did not cease to inspire contracts of convenientia, source of the authority of the great men; these were, like oaths of fidelity themselves, promises of security between equals.[29]

The significance of the church in tenth- and eleventh-century Languedoc was considerable. A cohesive community, it was greatly respected for its peace-keeping activities. In the Midi laymen did not push their claims over churches as far as they did in the north. The lay patron was responsible for defending the properties of his church and for disposing of some of its revenues – but the bishop and abbot, the patron saint and God were viewed as its proprietors. This prevented the great ecclesiastical lordships from losing substantial amounts of land to their advocates. Indeed in the tenth century the religious houses, such as Saint-Gilles, Lézat and Psalmodi, which had major aristocratic families as patrons, were generally more prosperous than the others; although those on the pilgrim route to Santiago di Compostela and with spectacular relics – such as Sainte-Foy at Conques (Source 2.2) – accrued immense wealth and status. Those monasteries which lacked potent defenders relied on the peace of God and on papal bulls of protection. But before the middle of the eleventh century very few were directly dependent on the papacy, tending instead to be subject to the local bishops.

SOURCE 2.2 RELIQUARY OF SAINTE FOY AT CONQUES, NINTH CENTURY AND LATER

The cult of St Faith (Sainte Foy) reached its peak during the eleventh century. Its origins stem from the bitter rivalry between two Carolingian monastic foundations at Conques and Figéac involving forged charters and fake history. The peak of skulduggery was reached in 866 with the theft by the monks of Conques of the prestigious relics of a fourth-century Christian martyr, Faith, from Agen. Part of her skull was set in a reliquary statue, eliciting in turn major

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donations; and in about 983 the saint responded with a spectacular miracle, replacing the eyeballs which had been ripped from the head of a certain Gilbert. Thereafter the cult went from strength to strength, with numerous prestigious gifts, a magnificent new church, completed by the early twelfth century, and the embellishment of Faith's statue.

Magnificent and awe-inspiring, Faith's metre-high reliquary, sheathed in gold and encrusted with jewels, and depicting her seated, was created from a number of components over several centuries. The head, the key element of the ninth-century original, is in fact of an adult male and derives from an imperial portrait bust. After Faith's great miracle it was adorned with a throne, crown and ecclesiastical vestments. Devotional statues of this type were characteristic of this part of southern France, but the power of Sainte Foy's reliquary, which seemed to pilgrims like the living saint, and its prestige were exceptional. Bernard of Angers, sent in 1013 by Fulbert bishop of Chartres to report on the miracles – regarded by many ecclesiastics as worthless fiction – was wholly won over by the saint when he witnessed her healing of a blind girl. Bernard defended the custom of reliquary statues as an aid to worship for simple folk, a pious memorial, rather than constituting idolatry.[30]

IMAGE 2.6 Reliquary of Sainte-Foy at Conques

© G.Tordjeman – www.tourisme-conques.fr

The ecclesiastical reform movement brought a number of changes in its wake, however. The church councils of the Midi were now concerned less with the peace of God and more with reforming issues. The direct authority of the papacy became

strikingly greater in the later eleventh century: Pope Gregory VII intervened in two elections to the archbishopric of Narbonne, and the bishop of Albi and Nîmes was excommunicated for simony. The members of a number of cathedral chapters including Toulouse and Albi became canons regular (p. 131) following papal intervention, and abbeys with strong papal connections built up congregations in the area: Moissac, a Cluniac house, was one, and Saint-Pons-de-Thomières another. Lay patrons of abbeys lost control of altar dues and tithes to some degree, and were excluded almost entirely from elections to abbacies and bishoprics. The church in the Midi lost much of its coherence and vitality as laymen and the ecclesiastical hierarchy became increasingly estranged, with the crusades their only major area of co-operation.

In the eleventh century, communes began to play an important part in the political life of the south. They spread rapidly both in the towns and in the countryside, and unlike their northern counterparts they frequently included members of the local nobility. Toulouse was the centre of a strong political movement against the authority of the count, its citizens, led by the rich merchants and powerful urban knights, achieving a great measure of independence by the end of the twelfth century. Montpellier was a merchant commune, Carcassonne more militarily orientated, and Lézat a rural commune.

Throughout the south, town and village communities alike attempted to gain judicial, financial and military privileges. In this they frequently succeeded, and violence in support of liberties occurred less frequently than in the north. These developments were supported by the increasing wealth of the Languedoc, and in particular by the revival of trade, both local and long-distance. Toulouse, for example – with links with England, Flanders and Champagne to the north and the Levant and Italy to the south – thrived on the profits of markets of wine, oil, grain, leather and metalware. Other towns too, such as Arles, Avignon, Barcelona, Montpellier, Narbonne and Saint-Gilles, became wealthy and prosperous. At the same time the rural economy was expanding, particularly in the river valleys and on the coastal plains. The pace of land colonisation increased and lay and ecclesiastical lords founded towns and villages.

The south of France was also home to a thriving culture. The school at Montpellier was important for the study of medicine and Roman law. Superb Romanesque churches with fine sculptures were constructed at Moissac, Conques and Toulouse (Saint-Sernin), where they may still be seen. In this area, too, troubadour poetry flourished, a vernacular literature which had originated probably in Aquitaine in the late eleventh century and which was supported with enthusiasm by the nobility of the Languedoc. Duke William the Young of Aquitaine, Raymond VI count of Toulouse and Richard I of England, the Lionheart, were all patrons and practitioners of this poetry.

One of its central preoccupations was the cult of 'courtly love', in which a lady is worshipped from afar by a lover who seeks to win her favour by displaying the chivalrous virtues of patience, constancy and prowess. Debates about its meaning and significance have been endless; one account concludes that it was at once

'a literary movement, an ideology, an ethical system, a style of life, an expression of the play element in culture, which arose in an aristocratic Christian environment exposed to Hispano-Arabic influences'.[31] Certainly it proved widely popular and spread to northern France during the twelfth century. There were other strands in this troubadour poetry as well: one exalted the married state and exhorted young girls to remain pure and chaste in preparation, another was far more earthy.

This was for its time a cultured and affluent society, and one which found the hopes of adventure, gain and salvation held out by the crusades a highly alluring prospect. The princes of Aquitaine, Toulouse and Barcelona and many of the nobility devoted much enthusiasm and effort to adventures in the east.

In the earlier twelfth century there was some interest in the Languedoc in the heretical preaching of Peter of Bruis and Henry of Lausanne (pp. 186–187), and in the later years of the century heretics, especially in the form of Albigensians (today often known as Cathars: p. 187) and Waldensians, were perceived by some contemporaries as a serious problem. They were vigorously condemned by church leaders – for instance at the council of Lombers, called in 1165 to examine early Albigensian preachers in the region, at which one archbishop, five bishops, six abbots and other important ecclesiastics were present.

Traditionally historians have accounted for the strength of heresy in the region in a range of ways. One explanation points to the opportunities for the interchange of ideas in this relatively urbanised, tolerant and wealthy society, and to the fragmented nature of political authority. For other historians, the main cause is seen as the rupture between the Catholic church and lay society resulting from the Gregorian reforms, as a result of which the upper ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy were increasingly preoccupied with papal and secular politics, while neglecting the cure of souls of the laity of all classes.[32]

The contrasts which the austere practices of the Albigensian and Waldensian adherents of the apostolic life presented with the often ill-disciplined and worldly hierarchy of the Catholic church were conspicuous. The church was, it is clear, not outstandingly fervent, and several of its most important ministers were clearly unsuited to their tasks. Archbishop Berengar of Narbonne (1190–1212), related to the royal house of Aragon, was accused by Pope Innocent III of loving only one god, money, and by 1213 he and eight other prelates had been deposed or suspended for failing to do their pastoral duties.

The austerity and asceticism of the heretics could have won them many adherents, including amongst the nobility, conspicuously absent from the meeting at Lombers. There was certainly no widespread appetite amongst laymen in the south to suppress heresy, as was found in other parts of France. Admittedly, in 1177 Count Raymond called on the pope and the Cistercians for help against the Albigensians, but his motives were not exclusively religious. The heretics were closely connected with the consuls, a group of citizens of Toulouse at that time trying to win self-government, and the church helped him to crush them. His successors, Raymond VI and Raymond VII, were not to be wholehearted supporters of the extirpation of heresy. It was to take the violence of the

Albigensian crusade and the severity of the inquisition to drive heresy from the Languedoc (pp. 229–232; 290–292).

Yet on much of the rest of the Catholic church in the Midi the records are silent, and it is probable that the contrasts between it and the church in other parts of France and Europe are often exaggerated. Two bishops from more northern areas of France, Matthew, bishop of Toul (1198–1210) and Hugh, bishop of Auxerre (1183–1206) were, for example, at least as worldly as their Languedocian contemporaries, although the latter helped his reputation considerably by his keen pursuit of heretics.

Recently, Pegg and Moore have argued that actual heretics were far less common in Languedoc than they seem in the sources: that they existed chiefly in the imagination of anxious and reform-minded clerics ready to interpret any variation in Christian doctrine or belief as evidence of heretical groups. This created a panic of which northern princes were only too keen to take advantage in pursuit of their own interest, in what eventually developed into the Albigensian crusade. Heresy accusations were in other words both a product of church reform and a political instrument. The argument may be overdrawn, but in any case the apparent prevalence of Albigensianism and other heresies in the south cannot be attributed to a single cause, but rather to the interplay of social, economic, political and ecclesiastical factors.[33]

The duchy of Aquitaine

By the end of the eleventh century, the duchy of Aquitaine was a large and diverse collection of counties and lordships, stretching down the whole west coast of France south of Brittany, inland to the heart of the Massif Central and south to the Pyrenees. There was a hiatus between the Carolingian duchy and its successor which was assembled in the early tenth century by a resourceful and well-connected Carolingian aristocrat, William I. By the time of William's later namesake, Duke William V the Great who died in 1030, the dukes, as well as controlling Poitou, exercised a varying degree of authority in the counties of Limoges, Berry, Saintonge, Auvergne, Périgord and La Marche. In some they were overlords in name only, although in the last two they could intervene quite successfully.

William the Great was regarded as a powerful ruler and a dangerous military adversary by his contemporaries, although some historians think that a series of succession struggles had sapped the authority exercised by his predecessors.[34] Under his sons, ducal power diminished further, independent castellanies began to appear in considerable numbers even in Poitou, and Aquitaine came strongly under the influence of the counts of Anjou. The fourth and last son to succeed William the Great, William VIII (1058–86) – known also as Guy-Geoffrey – managed to regain a considerable amount of ground. He recaptured Saintonge from Anjou in 1062, and in the next year he added the huge duchy of Gascony to the Aquitaine holdings. This was claimed through Brisca, one of William the Great's several wives, but it was a difficult area to control, as it contained many independent lordships (pp. 74–75).

Guy-Geoffrey and his successors William IX the Young (1086–1126) and William X the Toulousain (1126–37) were heavily preoccupied with their southern lands. William IX married Philippa of Toulouse in 1094, giving their descendants a claim to this neighbouring principality, which they were never able fully to realise despite long and continuing efforts. These dukes were patrons of the troubadours – William IX was one himself, and some of his poems survive – and enthusiastic crusaders. As a result of their southern outlook they paid less attention to Poitou than they might have done: while waging sporadic campaigns against castellans such as the lords of Parthenay and Lusignan, they never really succeeded in dominating them in the way that the French kings and the counts of Anjou were doing in their lands. Nevertheless they were wealthy and powerful rulers with wide and important connections, who nurtured ambitions which exceeded their material resources.[35]

In 1137 William X died, leaving his daughter Eleanor and his duchy to the French crown, a gain of major if only temporary importance to the Capetians. Eleanor bore Louis VII two daughters, but their marriage broke down and was dissolved by the pope on the grounds of consanguinity. Then in 1152 Eleanor married Henry of Anjou, later king of England, bringing the duchy of Aquitaine into his vast assemblage of lands, and passing it on to their sons Richard I and John.

Richard's attempts to dominate the turbulent nobles proved not entirely successful, and the lords of the Limousin, Angoulême and La Marche were to play a crucial role in the destinies of not only the duchy, but of all the Plantagenet dominions. Richard I was to meet his death fighting them,[36] and John's lands were declared forfeit by Philip Augustus for his mishandling of them. Thereafter the regional lords of highly disputed Poitou – Thouars, Parthenay, Mauléon and Lusignan – dominated this region until the 1240s, when their power was broken by Alfonso of Poitiers, brother of King Louis IX (pp. 263–264).

Gascony, Toulouse and Barcelona

The duchy of Gascony, stretching from Bordeaux to the Pyrenees, was in its political and social structures far closer to Toulouse than to most of the rest of the larger duchy of Aquitaine, to whose ruler it belonged from 1063. Much of it was uncultivated and was held as allods rather than as benefices – indeed the whole duchy was later claimed to be an allod (p. 407). Central political power was weak, and elite society was unusually lacking in formal hierarchy. First constituted as a Carolingian march, Gascony was then ruled by an independent comital family from Bordeaux until its transfer to the dukes of Aquitaine, who did little to strengthen their authority.

In the rich river valleys of the Garonne and the Adour and in other settled areas were to be found important castellanies, such as Lesparre, Castillon and Albret. In the south the viscounts of Dax were constant and valuable allies of the dukes, although they expended much energy in fighting the independent principality of

Béarn. Growing towns such as Bayonne and Mont-de-Marsan helped to increase the wealth of their lords, but in many parts of Gascony the castellans were virtually ungovernable. Dukes William IX and William X made some headway, and later so too did Richard I, but they were only partly successful. In this fragmentation of power, Gascony resembled its southern neighbours, the principalities of Toulouse and Barcelona.

The county of Toulouse had originally formed in the tenth century. In 924 Raymond III had annexed Gothia, the area stretching from Narbonne to Nîmes, and in 990 the marriage of count William Taillefer to Emma of Provence brought Tarascon and Argence to the county. The Toulouse counts were initially rivalled by the counts of Carcasonne, but it was the former who won control of many of the lesser nobles such as the viscounts of Rouergue, Narbonne, Béziers, Lodève, Nîmes and Toulouse, who were related to the counts of Toulouse and based their social standing on this.

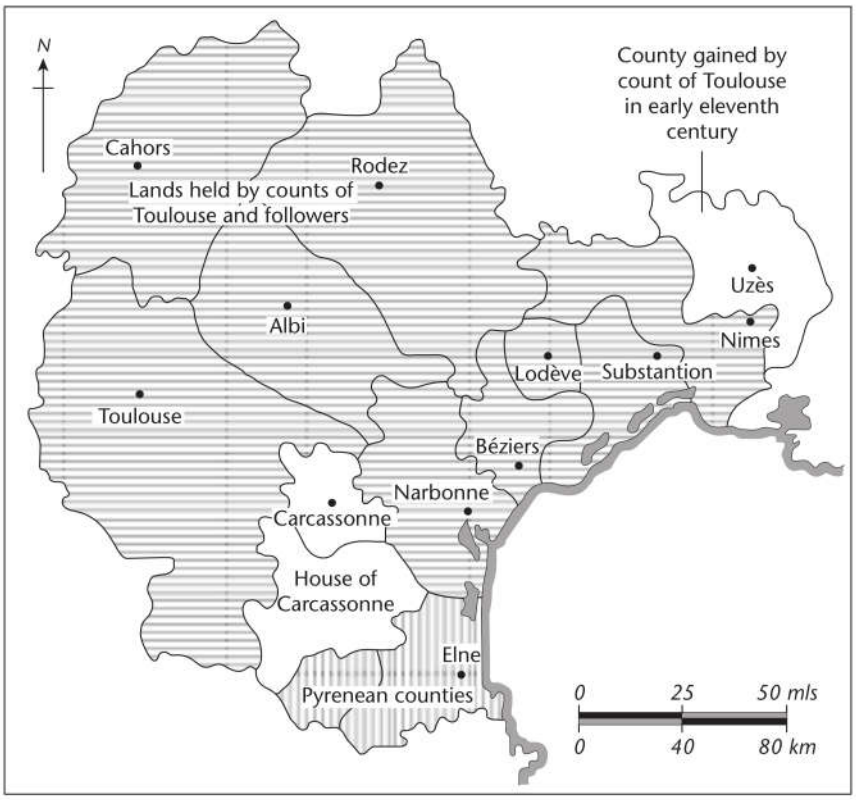
During the eleventh century, however, a considerable threat to comital control emerged in the shape of a new group of nobles and their castles. Many were the newly enriched patrons of ecclesiastical establishments or *viguiers*; others were castellans who managed to make hereditary the lands for which they were responsible. They were to some extent kept in check by the older families through agreements of *convenientiae* or alliance, and a great gulf still separated them from their social superiors; nevertheless, the Toulouse principality lost what coherence it had, and the church took the lead in trying to maintain law and order.

However, following the Gregorian reforms in the area in the later eleventh century, the greater nobles again began to consolidate their powers in the region. In 1093 Raymond IV of Saint-Gilles succeeded his brother William as count of Toulouse, and began to re-assemble the Toulouse principality. Raymond achieved great renown in the first crusade, and was succeeded by Bertrand and Alfonso Jordan, an able administrator and warrior (Map 2.5).

Within their relatively limited domains, the counts of Toulouse managed to retain some degree of authority, despite the problems posed by the independence and power of the ecclesiastical lordships and by the treacherous shifting of allegiance of the independent nobles – such as the Trencavel and the viscounts of Narbonne – between the counts and their enemies. Their frequent departures to the Holy Land and the periodic invasions of the dukes of Aquitaine made concerted efforts at centralisation and consolidation of power decidedly problematic, but they made good use of marriage alliances.

Although their authority was based on *convenientiae* rather than the direct application of public powers and their domains were scattered, the counts of Toulouse were beginning to develop an administration and to attempt to tap the revenues of the fast-growing commerce of Toulouse and other towns. Political decentralisation was kept in check by the continuing notion of public powers, by the rigidity of the social hierarchy, by the binding force of the contracts of alliance, and by the peace of God.

The main regional rivals to the counts of Toulouse around the year 1100 were the counts of Barcelona in Catalonia, what had been the Spanish March and an



MAP 2.5 The Toulouse principality in the eleventh century

area with increasingly tenuous links with the French crown. These counts had built up considerable power in the early tenth century. Their rising fortunes were stemmed after that, and in the 1040s and 1050s they were strongly challenged by a wealthy and aggressive aristocracy. But Raymond-Berengar I (1035–76) overcame these problems by fighting the castellans and buying their support, and by reorganising the military and judicial institutions of the county, while supporting the peace of God and the church reform movement. In 1067 he took Carcassonne and in 1071 Razès, which gave him a valuable foothold north of the Pyrenees. He attempted to leave all his lands in *pariage* to his sons Raymond-Berengar II and Berengar-Raymond II, but his plan foundered on internecine strife and provoked the intervention of Pope Gregory VII.

In 1082 Raymond-Berengar III succeeded to Barcelona as a minor, and proved to be a worthy rival to Alfonso-Jordan of Toulouse. A contemporary chronicler described him as 'a most pleasant and generous man, very skilled in arms'.[37] Under him the comital lands south of the Pyrenees acquired a stronger political organisation and a name, Catalonia, signifying its growing sense of identity. Raymond-Berengar III

built up many allies from among the smaller nobles to the north of the Pyrenees, while in 1113 he married Douce, heiress to Provence, and took this area, claimed by the counts of Toulouse since 1094 from another marriage alliance.

Alfonso-Jordan of Toulouse now rallied the citizens of Carcassonne, the count of Comminges and the king of Aragon against Raymond-Berengar III of Barcelona and his allies, the viscount of Narbonne and Duke William of Aquitaine. After one war they divided Provence in 1125, but more hostilities followed and then peace again in 1134. Meanwhile Raymond-Berengar III had died. His eldest son Raymond-Berengar IV took Barcelona, and Provence went to his brother Berengar-Raymond.

Poly showed that in Provence the counts of Barcelona imposed a strong degree of control over the castellans in the twelfth century, taxing them and demanding services and oaths of fidelity, although rarely receiving homage in return. In their other lands the counts also wielded a relatively potent and coherent power based on force, monetary grants and personal success.[38] Like most of the other territorial princes, they were unable to extend this throughout their lands, but they had the resources to build up a great deal of authority in northern Spain and the French Midi, for in 1137 Raymond-Berengar IV became the heir to the king of Aragon by marrying his daughter Petronilla. This gave him the expectation of a great bloc of land to the south of the Pyrenees as well as authority over the client seigneuries of Béarn and Bigorre to the north.

In 1159 he allied with Henry II Plantagenet, who wished to make good the claims of Aquitaine over Toulouse. Together they attacked the city, and the young count, Raymond V, was saved only by the intervention of King Louis VII. The house of Barcelona continued to become increasingly powerful in the Languedoc and was involved in politics on the European scale. Raymond-Berengar of Provence, nephew of Raymond-Berengar IV, married the niece of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa.

The next generation, Alfonso II of Aragon and Barcelona and Raymond V count of Toulouse, again spent a substantial part of their reigns fighting one another, even though they were still quite unable to dominate many of the lands nominally under their authority. Yet by the 1190s the king of Aragon seemed to be in control of the south of France. His brothers held Millau and Gevaudan, and he was allied with the Trencavels, the viscounts of Narbonne and the counts of Foix. He overshadowed the county of Toulouse, and only the independent county of Comminges under Bernard IV was outside his sphere of influence.

At the end of the twelfth century, however, Aragonese power in the Midi diminished considerably. In 1196 Alfonso II died and his lands were divided. Peter, his eldest son, took Aragon and Barcelona – the latter was finally to be released from its dependence by the French king in 1258 (p. 278) – and Alfonso took Millau, Gevaudan and Provence. The balance of power in the south now seemed more evenly matched. But now Peter II and Raymond VI of Toulouse were entirely, and strikingly, to reverse the pattern of the previous century: when threatened by the crusaders from the north, they stood together (p. 230).

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3

THE EARLY CAPETIANS, 987–1108

Introduction

The early Capetians: mere territorial princes?

The eleventh century was in many senses the apogee of princely power in France. Royal authority was weak and the dukes or counts of the more centralised states such as Normandy and Flanders could enjoy what amounted to sovereign authority almost undisturbed by their nominal rulers, the Capetian kings, who were in practice virtually one of their number. The king and the princes in eleventh-century France were similar in many different ways: in their outlook and shared political culture, in the nature of their power, in their efforts to tame and dominate their own lands, and in the ceremonial they used (pp. 35–36).

For the whole of the eleventh century and well into the twelfth, it might have seemed a real possibility that some of the great principalities would break away and become autonomous kingdoms.[1] That this did not happen was at least in part because the Capetians in the end had the marginal edge over the princes in a political arrangement which suited both, and in part because of the kings' close partnership with the church in France.

The Robertians, ancestors of the Capetians and very powerful princes in the tenth century, had eventually dislodged the Carolingians from the throne (pp. 24–31) and continued to hold their own principality to which they added some Carolingian lands and rights. But the monarchy that they seized was already greatly weakened, and they were unable to bring about any improvement in the situation, which if anything worsened. Fighting and jockeying for land and power at the expense of their neighbours, treating the princes as allies or enemies and not as subordinates: in the mid-eleventh century the king was very close to being a mere territorial prince.

Yet despite the limitations of royal power, the king's sacred and judicial attributes and his role as overlord still continued to be recognised and even on some occasions to be observed. Ecclesiastics developed and promoted the rituals that went with key royal occasions. Many royal powers were claimed by the princes as well, a sign that France was far from being demonarchised: a strong mutual respect for each other's rights and privileges sustained the political order.[2] Nevertheless, the recognition of royal attributes, while quite widely stressed under Hugh Capet and Robert the Pious, became increasingly rare in the middle of the eleventh century when royal power had reached a low ebb in the first half of Henry I's reign. At this moment, kingship weighed but lightly on the kingdom.

By the end of the 1050s there was for the first time in a century some slight recovery in the secular power of the king, perhaps as a result of social changes which were beginning to make society more hierarchical. This increased a little more under Philip I, and under Louis VI the importance of the king's sacral power revived as well: Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis fostered a resplendent image for him (pp. 197–203), which went well beyond even the veneration shown for Robert the Pious early in the eleventh century. But this is far from constituting a continuing and strong ecclesiastical tradition, just as on the secular side royal overlordship did not remain a consistently potent force throughout the eleventh century.

The sacral attributes that Hugh Capet and Robert the Pious enjoyed as kings were in large part an inheritance from their Carolingian predecessors. A clear example of this appears in the collections of canons of Abbo, abbot of Fleury, written in the 990s. The king, he says, is by God's grace responsible for regulating the affairs of the whole of his kingdom. His is the sole and overriding authority, an authority founded on many sacred texts.[3] Much of this is clearly based on earlier writings, for instance those of Jonas, bishop of Orléans, who drew together contemporary theories of kingship in the early ninth century.

The sacral nature of Carolingian kingship had been in large part constructed in collaboration with Frankish bishops. It was in further continuity with these ideas that Fulbert of Chartres emphasised in the early eleventh century that the king was the fountain-head of justice, with the power to punish wrongdoers for the good of the state, even though he was not always able effectively to fulfil this charge.[4] The traditions of sacred kingship, the creation of the Carolingian episcopacy, were thus transferred by the bishops of northern France to the new ruling house in 987, along with their political loyalty.

It was in line with this bowing to tradition that the accepted patterns of king-making were followed on the occasion of Hugh's elevation to the throne, with the coronation and the anointing of the king, a solemn and serious rite, as their centrepiece. It was this ceremony which set the king apart from his people. However, in a further illustration of their debt to their predecessors, the Capetian rulers began the process of king-making earlier, when a ruler designated his eldest surviving son to succeed him, as King Lothar had designated the short-lived Louis. All the Capetians until Philip Augustus did this, and all apart from Philip I had their heirs crowned in their own lifetimes.

It has often been said that they used anticipatory association of the heir as a system to perpetuate the dynasty's claims to the throne and as a reaction to its insecurity, but this interpretation only really makes sense for Hugh Capet's association of Robert the Pious. Later the device was used for a number of reasons; in Robert the Pious's case, to decide which son should succeed, in Louis VII's to provide himself with a coadjutor because he was unable to rule through sickness. The greater nobility also associated heirs with their fathers, and stopped using the device at about the same time as did the Capetians.[5]

Although this designation secured the throne for the heir, he still had to be chosen by his people at a solemn assembly. In the eleventh century these gatherings were attended by nobles, knights and clerics from a limited area of the French kingdom, but their significance was recognised by those who did not participate. For instance, William duke of Aquitaine did not bother to travel to court for Henry I's election in 1031, but he was well aware it was taking place.[6] This assembly would 'elect' the king, and although there is no evidence that any western European *electio* involved a majority vote, at least until the later twelfth century, the princes, bishops and other magnates in giving the new king their assent and acknowledgement were publicly recognising him and offering him their support.

Once the king had been chosen by his people, he was consecrated by the church. In another solemn ceremony he was blessed by the bishops, and he then promised in his coronation oath to uphold justice and to fight God's enemies. He was next anointed with the holy chrism, which set him apart from his people and put him on a par with the bishops and archbishops. The earliest recorded anointing in France is that of Pippin in 751, although legend later had it that the chrism had been brought from heaven by a dove for Clovis's baptism at Reims. This was a traditional coronation church of the Carolingians, and Hugh Capet's coronation here rather than in the archdiocese of Sens, where the Robertians had been crowned, was the sign of his acceptance (pp. 25–26). The anointing was followed by the investiture of the king with his regalia, the symbols of his office, the sword, ring, sceptre and rod, given by the bishops.

Next the king was crowned, normally by the archbishop of Reims, and enthroned. The order of service (*ordo*) used in the early Capetian period was the Frankish one drawn together by Hincmar of Reims in the late ninth century. For Louis VI's coronation, held at Sens, however, an English *ordo* was used, the so-called Ratold *ordo*, containing references in the prayers to the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Although later coronations were again at Reims, this same *ordo* continued to be used, doubtless sanctified by tradition, until the reign of Louis IX.[7]

The coronations of the early Capetians were important events, which gave them a claim to exercise holy kingship. But while the sacral attributes of Hugh Capet and Robert the Pious were emphasised by the royalist bishops and were widely reflected in contemporary writings, during the reigns of Henry I and Philip I who succeeded them, far less emphasis was placed on holy kingship. Philip, indeed, was said to have lost the miraculous healing touch of his father.

Nor did either king inspire much interest from ecclesiastical writers; although many of the princes found biographers and apologists, the kings do not play a central role even in general narratives of the period (though these are scanty). These Capetians lacked the heroic attributes which their Carolingian predecessors had enjoyed; although they became their legitimate successors to the throne, they lost much of their *kudos*. That gradually changed in the twelfth century as Charlemagne's cult began to be appropriated for Capetian use, and when the sacred role of the king was regenerated as royal authority revived; but in the later eleventh century the lack of interest in Henry I and Philip I is a striking reflection of the limited nature of their real powers.

Yet the sacral attributes of the royal office were never completely forgotten, and nor was the king's role as lawgiver and keeper of the peace, even though in much of the kingdom this duty was actually carried out by the church. The king was also recognised as the overlord of the whole kingdom, to whom the great men of the kingdom, as his vassals, owed service and counsel, as Abbo of Fleury affirmed.[8]

The king's position at the summit of a hierarchy was widely acknowledged. He was not in reality the focus of political power, because there was no single focus, just as most of the French regional and local societies were far from being neatly organised in descending order. But the king's theoretical role as overlord to whom loyalty was due from the princes and to whom military service was to be rendered was clear, and the latter obligation was sometimes fulfilled, particularly in the late eleventh century.

And although most of the territorial princes did not pay homage or attend the royal court with any regularity during the eleventh century, and the king's entourage was composed of increasingly humble men, the idea that the great of the realm owed him ultimate fidelity as their king, and derived their powers from him, was never entirely lost from sight. When articulated by Abbot Suger in the twelfth century and backed up with royal action in the thirteenth, it was generally accepted in practice. The example of the emperors and of the Anglo-Norman kings was perhaps of some value here.

A clear distinction should therefore be drawn between political theory and practice. In the realms of theory the kings retained their powers, even if by the middle of the eleventh century reality at times showed through. There was to be some revival in royal power from the late 1050s, but before this, at the level of practical politics there was not a great difference between the king and the princes. An understanding of this background is fundamental to an analysis of the events of the early Capetian period.

The kings and their reigns

Hugh Capet, 987–96

Hugh Capet's reign seems to have marked little significant change in the powers and policies of the French kings. The first Capetian king is, indeed, a rather

ill-documented figure. Raoul Glaber described him as active in body and mind, but this stereotyped phrase is not very revealing. Like Richer, Glaber chronicles the events of the reign but gives very little insight into Hugh as a person. It is suggested by these writers that he was pious and that his tastes were simple. Helgaud of Fleury emphasised his interest in monasticism and told of how he was scandalised on discovering a pair of lovers in the abbey church of Saint-Denis.

Hugh's marriage to Adela of Aquitaine ensured a truce with this powerful principality, and the events of his reign suggest that he relied on diplomacy rather than war where possible. The royal *acta* point up the strength of his alliance with the higher clergy. Of the dozen or so of his extant charters which can be accepted as genuine, almost all went to important prelates and to monasteries, and most of these in the north of the kingdom. However, Hugh's contemporary, Emperor Otto III of Germany, issued many more charters (more than 300 survive). Otto's kingdom was admittedly much larger than Hugh's, but in his classic study of Hugh's reign, Lot suggests that this difference also reflects the disengagement of the great monastic houses in Hugh's kingdom, who, realising how limited royal power was becoming, stopped asking the king for charters.[9] Nor did Hugh's secular authority command consistent respect: in a celebrated exchange with Adalbero count of Périgueux he urged him as his overlord to abandon his siege of Tours. He reportedly asked Adalbero who had made him count, to remind him that he derived his powers from the king. Adalbero dismissively responded 'Who made you king?'[10]

The support of the important churchmen had been vital in Hugh's election and he continued to rely on them against the challenge of the Carolingian claimant to the throne, Charles of Lorraine. Hugh had his own son crowned so as to ensure his future succession, and he gave the town of Verdun, disputed with the empire, to the young Otto III as a peace offering. Hugh also prioritised dealing with Charles over an appeal for support against the Muslim forces in the south from Borel, count of Barcelona. Borel and the other southern princes learned they had to look elsewhere for political support, for the king was occupied with his Carolingian rivals.

Charles, supported by Arnulf, an illegitimate son of the Carolingian king Lothar who had died in 986, seized the strongly fortified city of Laon and defied and challenged the king. Hugh's response was twofold. He called an ecclesiastical council which excommunicated Charles and he also tried to recapture Laon. The latter scheme failed; but Hugh, not deterred, tried to win over Arnulf by making him archbishop of Reims in succession to Adalbero, who had just died.

This was not in the event a wise move. At first Charles merely continued to dominate the Laonnais, while attempts to mediate by Empress Theophano, regent for Otto III, met with no success. Then in 989 Archbishop Arnulf treacherously handed over the Reims area to Charles as well. Charles also won the support of Conrad, king of Burgundy, and Odo I, count of Blois. Even the influential ecclesiastic Gerbert of Aurillac appeared to be moving towards the Carolingian camp, although Gerbert not long afterwards wrote to Pope John XV on Hugh's behalf, asking that Arnulf be condemned for his depredations.

Hugh was forced to act by the strength of the opposition, and in 990 he gathered together an army against his adversaries. When Charles of Lorraine offered battle he retreated, however, and turned to diplomacy again. This time Hugh was more fortunate, for he succeeded in winning round Odo of Blois. Then the really decisive blow was struck for him. In 991 Adalbero, bishop of Laon, entered this town under the pretext of negotiating with Charles and Arnulf, and managed to take both of them prisoner. Charles was held captive and appears to have died in about 993. He left sons but, perhaps curiously, they aroused little discontent.

Led by the bishops, the northern French nobility were soon reconciled to the new arrangement whereby the Capetians became the uncontested ruling dynasty, as the Robertians, their ancestors, had not been. This was achieved with the backing of the church, and eased by what was in fact a rather commonplace blood link, very much like that of the other princes, with the Carolingians. This, carefully presented by ecclesiastical writers such as André of Fleury and Odoran of Sens, gave them a mantle of respectable legitimacy.

Meanwhile the treacherous Arnulf, archbishop of Reims, still remained a problem for the king, and in 991 at the council of Saint-Basle Hugh had him tried for treason. Abbo, abbot of Fleury, upheld the right of the pope rather than the king to conduct this process, but Arnulf, bishop of Orléans, dismissing the pontiffs as weak and corrupt placemen, held that this was a matter for the French church and not the papacy. Hugh and his bishops tried, condemned and dethroned Arnulf of Reims, and Gerbert of Aurillac was elected in his stead.

This infuriated both the pope and the emperor. Papal legates were sent to France to try to discipline the French bishops, but they held further councils antagonistic to any such idea. The synod of Chelles in 993, for example, declared that if the pope put forward an opinion which ran counter to the scriptures it was invalid, and that no one should dare rashly to attack the findings of a provincial synod. All this was indicative of a strong anti-papal sentiment in the late tenth-century French church, and an impasse was reached which was broken only after Hugh's death in 996. Then Robert the Pious made peace with the pope; Gerbert fled to Germany and then to Italy and became first archbishop of Ravenna and finally pope at the behest of Otto III. Arnulf was reinstated as archbishop of Reims.

The shifting of allegiance by Archbishop Arnulf between the king and his rivals was paralleled by the double dealing of Odo I, count of Blois. Hugh granted him the town of Dreux in 991 in return for the promise of his help against Charles of Lorraine. Odo however rendered the king no assistance, and he also seized the town of Melun; Hugh was forced to lay siege to it in order to retrieve it. With the perfidious Adalbero, bishop of Laon, Odo then plotted against Hugh. It was thought by contemporaries that he hoped to hand France over to the Emperor Otto III and to become duke of the Franks himself.

This scheme came to nothing, and Odo was now threatened in his turn by Fulk Nerra, count of Anjou, who was trying to capture the Touraine. So the count of Blois aligned himself with Richard I, duke of Normandy, William IV, duke of Aquitaine, and Baldwin IV, count of Flanders, while Fulk Nerra allied with the

king against this powerful coalition. The king's enemies, however, were unable to devise a concerted plan of action, and little was achieved by them.

By the beginning of 996, Odo was outmanoeuvered by the Capet-Anjou alliance and arranged a truce with Hugh Capet. Shortly afterwards the count of Blois died leaving only children, Odo II and Theobald, to succeed him, and the threat to the Capetians from this quarter diminished for a while. Throughout Hugh's last year of life, however, he had to contend with the repercussions of the relationship between his son and heir, Robert, and Bertha of Blois, wife and then widow of Odo I. As they were cousins in the third degree, the liaison was greatly frowned on by the church.[11]

Little was achieved by Hugh in political terms beyond mere survival as king. In his diplomacy and alliances he continued to behave as the territorial prince he had been before his accession. In practical political terms he was weaker by far than Fulk Nerra, count of Anjou, and he was opposed directly first by Charles of Lorraine and then by Odo I of Blois. He owed his eventual ascendancy over them to his own good fortune and the incompetence of his rivals rather than to military prowess; he escaped open defeat by rarely taking to the field and by negotiating with his opponents. In this he probably gained by the prestige which the royal office brought with it, as well as by the backing of much of the church in France. Despite these advantages, the first Capetian king emerges as an unimposing figure.

Robert II 'the Pious', 996–1031

The long reign of Robert the Pious was marked by several significant historical events: the turning of the millennium, with its associated religious movements; the peace of God (pp. 22–23); and the Cluniac revival in monasticism. Also in this period occurred the definitive separation of the two halves of the Carolingian empire into the eastern, holy Roman empire, and the western kingdom of Francia, and with it the end of the idea that the ruler of one had any right to rule the other, symbolized by the meeting of Robert and Emperor Henry II on the frontier in 1023.

The king is said by Helgaud of Fleury and by Adalbero of Laon to have been tall and thick-set with a fair complexion. He was educated at the cathedral school at Reims under the tutelage of Gerbert of Aurillac and continued as something of a scholar later in life. Glaber judged him 'a wise young man who was exceedingly learned in the study of the arts and of letters',[12] and Richer said that he was well versed in canon law and applied himself well to liberal studies. The same writer also described him as an energetic man who loved waging war.

Robert showed drive and vigour throughout most of his reign, and modern scholarship suggests that his qualities and achievements have been underestimated.[13] This was partly because anachronistic standards of strong kingship were long applied to Robert, but largely because the king's biography, which has until recently greatly influenced historians of the reign, was written by his chaplain Helgaud of Fleury. This is a semi-hagiographical work, with little concern for

secular politics and governance. Robert is portrayed as the perfect king, a lover of the poor and weak, a dispenser of charity, a humble man of pronounced piety, constantly at prayer and frequently founding and building religious houses and churches. 'For in him', says Helgaud, 'priests, abbots and monks found an example of virtue not only worthy of imitation but also of admiration'. It is thus easy to see, with Helgaud, Robert the Pious as a plaster saint, and to attribute his received failings to excessive piety and lack of worldly ambition.

Many of our other sources confirm Robert's piety, particularly in the later part of his reign, in a rather less hyperbolic way. Adémar of Chabannes saw him as 'a man of clear virtue and great piety' and Raoul Glaber as 'distinguished in piety'. Richer portrays him taking part in church synods with the French bishops, discussing and regulating ecclesiastical affairs. In 1027, Robert even grew concerned about the falling of blood-red rain, and commissioned senior clerics such as Archbishop Gauzlin of Bourges to look into its religious implications. Furthermore, he was the first king who was attributed with the power of healing scrofula by touch.

Having analysed Robert's surviving charters, Koziol suggests that his support for reforming monastic orders, most notably the Cluniacs in Burgundy and Fécamp and Jumièges in Normandy, his pilgrimage to cult centres in Aquitaine, his peace initiatives in Burgundy and his own lands, were part of a coherent programme of kingship and governance. This programme was however not without its critics: Bishop Adalbero of Laon castigated the king for his excessive reliance on the monastic reformers and mockingly suggested that Abbot Odilo of Cluny rather than Robert was king, while an anonymous critic considered that Robert's reliance on peace oaths to preserve order was a sign of weakness: he should instead enforce justice by the sword.[14]

This apparent paragon had another side, especially when a young man. His private life was turbulent: he defied much of the French church and the papacy for several years by living openly with Bertha of Blois, who was not regarded as his lawful wife (pp. 88–89). This episode is carefully glossed over by Helgaud, who suggests that although the liaison was considered by some as illicit, the king more than made up for it in time in his pious reconciliation with the church.

Moreover, during his invasion of Burgundy in 1003 the monastery of Saint-Germain at Auxerre stood in the way of a military campaign, and he burned it down. He also gave his comrade and perhaps half-brother Gauzlin the abbacy of Fleury in 1004, and in 1012 he made him archbishop of Bourges as well. On both occasions this provoked much opposition from the communities involved, according to Adémar of Chabannes; for Gauzlin was illegitimate. In the event he proved an able administrator and builder at Fleury, which flourished under his rule.

Of the early Capetians, Robert was the most active south of the Loire. Soon after his accession, he campaigned in Poitou and Berry (997), where he forced the submission of the *vicomte* of Bourges. The king was at Saint-Jean-d'Angély in 1010, and travelled through Aquitaine for a whole year from Lent 1019 to Easter 1020. Whether the purpose of these visits was to outdo the public piety of the counts of Poitou, his rival for secular dominance in the region, as has been suggested by

Rouche, or whether he had more conventional political ends, it cannot be said that royal authority, in the person of Robert the Pious, was absent from Aquitaine.[15]

Robert indeed travelled widely, visiting most parts of the kingdom of Francia, usually as the honoured guest of the territorial prince, and on these occasions issued royal diplomas to demonstrate his sovereignty. The diplomatic practice of the royal chancery contrived to show Robert in his most regal light, and its products, when read aloud to public gatherings, served widely to disseminate the ideology of kingship.

Thus by his physical presence and the official acts issued in his name, Robert preserved and enhanced an image of royalty which was not matched by his actual political authority. Nevertheless, the greatest of the territorial princes such as the dukes of Normandy and Aquitaine acknowledged Robert's superiority over them. Whatever Robert's sovereignty entailed beyond the royal lands of the Ile de France and Burgundy, he was at the least first amongst equals.

In the early years of his rule there was considerable tension between Robert and much of the French church. Initially Hugh Capet had hoped that his son could marry a daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine. This plan failed, and instead Robert married Rozala or Suzanne, daughter of Berengar, former king of Italy, and widow of Arnulf II, count of Flanders. But Robert took a strong dislike to her and in 991 he repudiated her, although he was careful to retain Montreuil in Ponthieu which had come as her dowry. This infuriated her son Baldwin IV, count of Flanders.

When Robert became king in 996 he was already much attracted to Bertha countess of Blois, a Carolingian and a daughter of Conrad II, king of Burgundy. The timely death of her husband Odo I enabled Robert to contemplate a second marriage, which also, given the importance of the Blois-Chartres principality, made good political sense. The nuptials were celebrated in 997 by Archambaud, archbishop of Tours, but were clearly in breach of canon law and greatly shocked contemporaries. Not only were Robert and Bertha related in the third degree but Robert was the godfather of one of Bertha's children, giving them spiritual affinity as well. The second alone was normally enough to prevent a marriage from taking place.

Pope Gregory V, although in a precarious position in Italy, having been driven out of Rome by Crescentius, nevertheless summoned a synod at Pavia in 998 and condemned the union of Robert and Bertha. This was with the encouragement of the emperor Otto III who was anxious to prevent a claim to the kingdom of Burgundy being created for the French kings; and for the pope it was a blow against the independence of the French bishops.[16]

The ruling had no effect and in 998 a general council of the church was called in Rome. This pronounced an anathema against Robert and severely rebuked those French bishops who had supported the king. Again there was little reaction, and when in 999 Gerbert of Aurillac became pope, taking the name Sylvester II, pressure was taken off Robert. His connections with Bertha had meanwhile brought him into alliance with the house of Blois and hostility towards the enemy

of Blois, Anjou. Bertha's young sons, Odo II and Theobald II, were given a considerable degree of protection.

In about 1004 Robert put aside Bertha, perhaps through rather tardy religious scruples, or perhaps because she had given him no children, and married Constance, daughter of William I, count of Arles, and of Adela of Anjou, and thus first cousin to Fulk Nerra.[17] Perceived by many contemporaries as an imperious and unscrupulous woman, she introduced what Glaber saw as scandalous habits from the south into the court. But worse, she polarized the court into two factions, one favouring herself and the Angevin interest, the other, Bertha and her sons.

The king tired rapidly of Constance and began to turn back towards Bertha and her family. On one relative, Hugh count of Beauvais, he heaped honours and titles, including that of count palatine. The Anjou faction struck back in sinister fashion. In 1008 Fulk Nerra had Hugh assassinated while he was out hunting with the king, and then, ignoring a summons to appear before the royal court, he set off on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In a letter written at about this time, Fulbert of Chartres comments that the king 'whose position makes him the fountain-head of justice, is so beset by wickedness that at present he is unable to avenge himself or aid us as he should'.[18]

In 1010 the king attempted to divorce Constance but was dissuaded from this by Pope Sergius IV. The couple remained married and continued to quarrel for the rest of Robert's life, not least about the way in which Constance managed Robert's royal household and residences, for which she earned a formidable reputation. She constructed a new royal palace at Étampes to match that of her husband in Paris: both were described by Helgaud of Fleury as noble and imposing buildings. She was also much criticised by ecclesiastics for savagery, reputedly striking out the eye of her former confessor with her staff during his trial for heresy.

The succession was likewise a matter of considerable tension between the king and queen: Hugh, their promising eldest son and heir, was crowned in 1017 but died in 1025. The next son, Henry, was now his father's choice as the next king, but Constance apparently saw him as a lazy and weak hypocrite, favouring their third son Robert. Between 1027 and 1030 the two brothers, seeking power and resources for themselves, banded together in revolt against both their parents and on the king's death in 1030 the dispute continued with their mother (p. 92).

Although Robert's vigorous military campaigns did not always meet with much success, one enterprise did bring great rewards. In 1002 Henry, duke of Burgundy and brother of Hugh Capet, died without leaving a direct heir. The king, as his nephew, decided to claim the duchy for himself. He was opposed by Odo-William, count of Mâcon, the son of Gerberga who had married Duke Henry *c.*974; Odo-William had been adopted by his step-father and designated his heir.

The Burgundian nobility seemed to favour Odo-William's candidature and for a while he was able to resist the king strongly. In the face, however, of violent ravaging of the duchy by a royal army, first he, and then his own son-in-law Landri, count of Nevers, submitted. King Robert held Auxerre and Avallon but it took another decade of sporadic campaigning before he was able to take Sens and Dijon

and for his authority to be recognised by the nobles. His son Henry was invested as duke but after the king's death and the war between his sons, Burgundy went to Robert, the kingdom to Henry. Capetian overlordship over this important duchy had now however been established (p. 38).

In the 1020s Robert, emboldened by his eventual success in Burgundy, turned to more grandiose schemes. He first made an alliance with Odo II, count of Blois, and William the Great, duke of Aquitaine, whereby various claims were to be made good – his own to Lorraine, Odo's to the kingdom of Burgundy and William's to the crown of Lombardy, which Robert had been offered but had turned down. These schemes amounted to very little in practice, and had to be abandoned because the parties could not agree. They also left the way open for Emperor Conrad II to invade Lombardy. Nevertheless, they are a measure of a somewhat revived prestige of the king in France, reflected also in his dealings with other princes.

Although he attacked Flanders twice (1006 and 1019) in alliance with the emperor, Robert managed at other times to remain on moderately good terms with its counts. His daughter Adela married Baldwin son of Baldwin IV, count of Flanders. The king oscillated between alliances with Anjou and Blois, and that they did not together turn on the king is perhaps an indication of the depths of their rivalry. In all his dealings Robert the Pious achieved little in terms of longlasting gain, but his neo-Carolingian horizons, his negotiations and military campaigns, which ranged more widely within the kingdom than those of his father Hugh Capet or of his son Henry I, seem to have revived a wider awareness of the monarchy for a few years at least.

Henry I, 1031–60

Of Henry I's character we know very little. His reign is not well covered by contemporary sources, and studies by Dhondt and Lemarignier, drawing on documentary evidence, saw him as an enigma. A recent study by Dejardin-Bazaille portrays a lacklustre figure, concluding that he remains surrounded by a '*parfum de mystère*'.[19] This king, unlike his father and son unexceptionable in his private life, made two prestigious marriages. In 1043 he wed Matilda, niece of the Emperor Henry III, who died in 1044, and then in 1051 he married Anne (Image 3.1), daughter of Jaroslav the powerful prince of Kiev, who witnessed a number of charters alongside him.

Henry attracted little critical comment apart from that of Hariulf of Saint-Riquier, who described him as covetous, probably because he took a village away from his abbey. Moreover, when in 1027 he was crowned as his father's successor, he elicited hostility in a letter to Fubert of Chartres as 'secretive, languid and effeminate', neglectful of his father's interests. Yet of the mature king, the monastic author of the *Life of Saint Lietbert*, Ralph, said he was 'a man vigorous in arms and worthy of the realm he held'.[20] Glaber describes Henry as lively in mind and active in body, but this is a formula much favoured by this author.

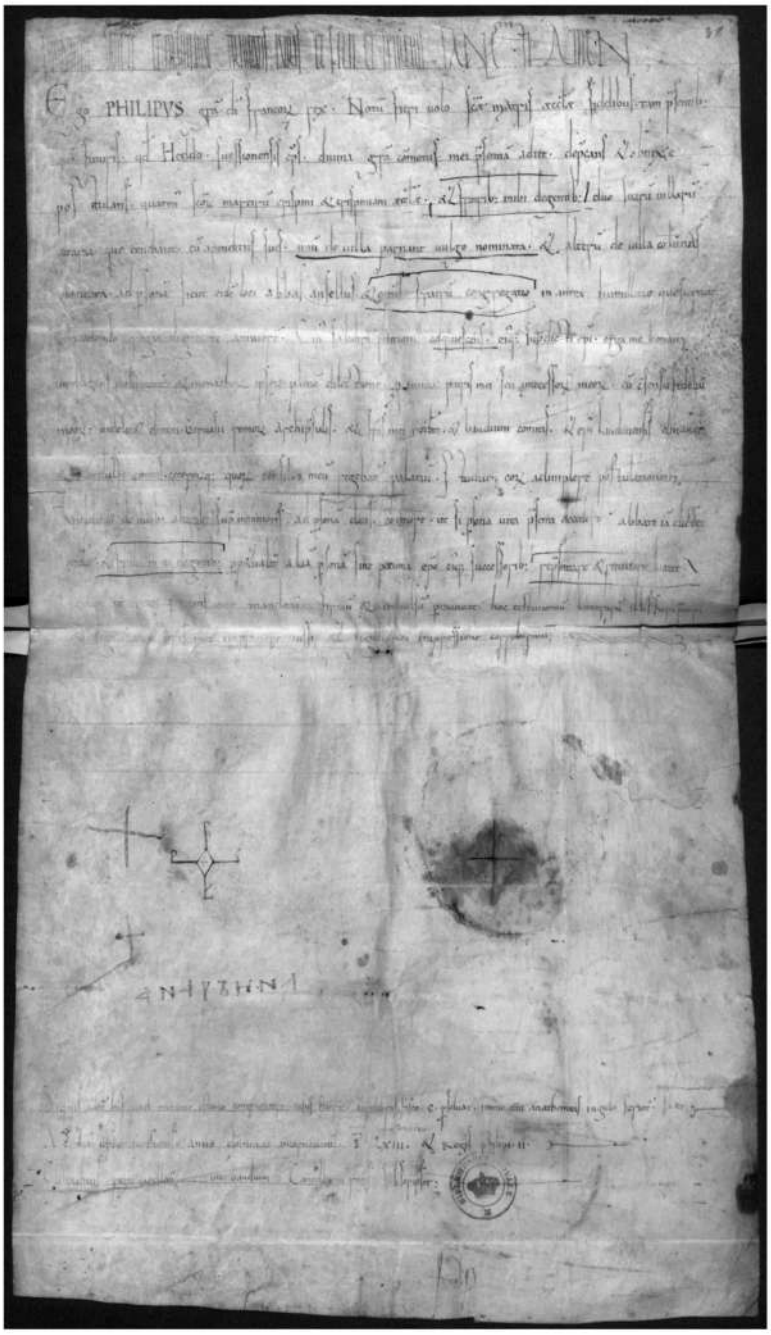


IMAGE 3.1 Signature of Queen Anne of Kiev in old Slavic letters on a royal charter of 1063

BN MS Picardie 294, f. 38

Other monastic writers, too, describe him in conventional terms as a most active knight and brave warrior, who acquired or constructed many castles. His surviving *acta* show that he was conventionally generous to the church, most of his grants going to ecclesiastical establishments in the royal lands; and in about 1060 he founded the monastery of Saint-Martin-des-Champs near Paris for regular canons and showed much interest in this new group of religious, in part for political reasons (pp. 130–131).

The Fleury chronicle describes how, soon after the death of Robert the Pious in 1031, his widow Constance seized on behalf of her son and favourite Robert the towns or castles of Senlis, Sens, Béthisy, Dammartin, Le Puiset, Melun and Poissy. Raoul Glaber however portrayed her rebellion as a quarrel with both sons, and as these were her dower lands she may have been attempting to retain her rights over them. Whichever interpretation is correct, she bought the support of Odo II of Blois by handing over half of Sens to him. Henry, the designated and crowned heir of his father, won the backing of Robert the Magnificent, duke of Normandy, Fulk Nerra of Anjou and Baldwin IV of Flanders. With their help Henry regained Poissy and Le Puiset, and Constance surrendered to him: she died within a year of this defeat.[21]

Robert his brother was now confirmed in his possession of the duchy of Burgundy. Had Henry retained it, Burgundy would have been a valuable addition to royal resources, but this would almost certainly have aroused considerable resistance within the duchy. Moreover, the grant was quite in keeping with contemporary inheritance patterns and reflected his father's wishes. The new king may also have granted away the French Vexin to the Norman duke as a reward for his support. A difficult political crisis had been resolved, but royal power in France and the royal principality had suffered a considerable setback.

The subsequent events of Henry's reign seem to fall into two main phases. In the first, until about 1044, he was preoccupied with the house of Blois. Odo II was trying to make good his own claim to the kingdom of Burgundy, and many of the nobles of the Ile de France were acting in concert with him. In 1033 Henry concluded an alliance with Emperor Conrad II, but the count of Blois took the part of Odo, the king's youngest brother, who had been left landless. They rallied a coalition of nobles in opposition to Henry. In 1034 after savage fighting Odo of Blois submitted, but war broke out again soon afterwards.

In 1037 Odo of Blois died while fighting in Lorraine and his lands were divided between his sons, Theobald I who took Blois and Stephen who was given Troyes and Meaux. The war with the king continued, as Stephen and Theobald now took the part of Odo the king's brother, a focus for discontent. The king was victorious: Odo was captured, Stephen defeated and his ally, the count of Vermandois, imprisoned, while their supporters from the castellans of the royal principality were brought to heel for a time. The king took control of Sens together with the abbeys of Saint-Père at Châlons and Saint-Médard at Soissons, and later in 1055 when the count of Sens died, Henry was able to take over his office and powers.

The immediate threat to the royal principality had been overcome, and in the second part of his reign Henry was now able to consolidate his power here and to

battle with the princes of northern France on more equal terms. Henry I fought first against Geoffrey Martel of Anjou and then against William of Normandy, playing off one against the other and involving himself in their growing rivalry. By 1040 Geoffrey's power in France was considerable, and he was emerging as a dangerous rival to the king. He had gained as an ally the future Emperor Henry III, who had married his wife's daughter, Agnes, in 1043. Later Pope Leo IX, hostile to royal power over the French church, also supported Geoffrey, as did William Aigret, duke of Aquitaine, whose mother, Agnes, Geoffrey married.

In 1044 Geoffrey, acting on the sanction given by a royal investiture a few years previously, captured the Touraine and Vendôme from Theobald I of Blois. These grave setbacks for the house of Blois brought Theobald and King Henry into an alliance. Henry also brokered an alliance with an enemy of Emperor Henry III, Godfrey of Upper Lotharingia. Godfrey was fighting the emperor because he had not been allowed to inherit Lower Lotharingia from his father. Together with Baldwin of Flanders, the duke and the king hoped to invade Lotharingia in 1047, but in 1048 the king concluded a treaty of peace with Henry III and abandoned Godfrey.

Henry had meanwhile gained another ally in William of Normandy, who was seeking both to defend himself against Angevin aggression and to improve his precarious position inside the duchy, to which he had succeeded in 1035 as a minor. In 1047 a powerful coalition of nobles massed against him. William sought royal support and was rescued by the king, who defeated the rebels at the battle of Val-ès-Dunes. Then from 1048 until 1052 Henry and William together made war on Anjou. In 1048 they captured Mouliherne and in 1049 William went into Maine while the king marched into the Touraine.

By the early 1050s William began to seem a greater threat to the king than Geoffrey Martel, and in 1052 another royal volte-face took place as the king switched his alliance from Normandy to Anjou. Geoffrey Martel had repudiated his wife Agnes, descended from Odo-William of Burgundy and former wife of William the Great of Aquitaine, and with her had alienated her daughter Agnes, wife of Emperor Henry III. This isolated Geoffrey from the emperor, and he now sought Henry I's friendship; he and the king found a common enemy in William of Normandy.

Henry I therefore supported the rebellion of the count of Arques against the Norman duke in 1053, and in 1054 he and Geoffrey moved into Normandy, together with the king's brother Odo. The latter was soundly beaten by William at Mortemer and the king and Geoffrey retreated. William went on the offensive and moved into Maine, but his gains were shortlived. In 1058 the king and Geoffrey Martel again invaded Normandy but part of their army was cut off and massacred at Varaville. In 1060 when both of them died little had been decided, but their disappearance from the political scene gave William of Normandy ample opportunities for territorial expansion. These he used to considerable effect (p. 55).

The king was less closely involved in other political rivalries of the time. In the early 1050s William Aigret, duke of Aquitaine, had declared war on Anjou, but

in 1053 peace was re-established by the duke. Another short but inconclusive war was waged between Theobald of Blois and Geoffrey of Anjou in the mid 1050s, in which the king took little part. Nor did he intervene in a war between Germany and Flanders. Although the emperor offered him part of Lotharingia in return for his support, he was too occupied with Normandy to do anything about it. In 1056 the king fell out with the emperor, but Henry died soon afterwards. Very little emerged from all these shifting coalitions.

Henry I's reign is often seen as a time when royal power, although initially weak, rallied somewhat.[22] As a territorial prince in the limited sphere of northern France, this king was not entirely unsuccessful. A realist who recognised the reduced importance of the monarchy, and who consolidated what he had, he managed effectively to hold and strengthen his powers in the Ile de France (p. 110). He was able to contain the threat of Blois-Champagne and to profit from the involvement of Normandy and Anjou against one another.

Henry's wider schemes, particularly for regaining Lotharingia, were much less successful, and in this kind of enterprise Geoffrey Martel's effectiveness appears to have been far greater than the king's. The sphere of Henry's politics and warfare was more limited than that of his father, as was the distribution of his *acta* (pp. 111–113). The reduced royal horizons and range of royal activities served only to narrow further the influence of the French king in a wider France. Perhaps Henry I was through force of circumstance too much a territorial prince, too little a king.

Philip I, 1060–1108

Philip I enjoyed an almost uniformly bad press from his contemporaries. Robert his grandfather had shown an almost equal antipathy to ecclesiastical claims, had even burned down a monastery, and yet was dubbed 'the Pious'. But Philip probably went rather further than Robert in personal turpitude, and in the age of papal reform his many actions opposed to the ecclesiastical programme loomed large in the eyes of the now more militantly reforming clergy. Philip was 'a most venal man in what belonged to God' according to Guibert of Nogent, who also asserted that he had lost the healing touch of many of his line.[23] Ignoring all ecclesiastical sanctions, he lived openly with Bertrada of Montfort, wife of Fulk le Réchin of Anjou, in what was considered by many contemporaries an incestuous, and by some a bigamous union.

He seems to have sold church offices, plundered religious houses and aroused widespread hostility from the French episcopate. Often moderately though not conspicuously openhanded to the monastic orders, Philip refounded his father's house of Saint-Martin-des-Champs as a Cluniac priory, although he was not outstandingly generous towards Fleury, where he was eventually buried (pp. 134–135); the latter may reflect a shift of political emphasis towards the south of the royal principality as much as a wish for personalised intercession.

Named by his mother, Anne of Kiev, with one of her family names, in his youth Philip is said by Raoul Tortaire, one of the Fleury chroniclers, to

have been an active man. Another writer described him as a man of prudence and intelligence. More of an opportunist than a warrior, he rapidly became obese and inactive, spending most of his time, again according to Tortaire, in gluttony and sleep. Orderic Vitalis wrote: 'King Philip was indolent, fat and unfit for war'.[24] Eclipsed by the great princes, in later life the fourth Capetian king emerges from the sources as an idle, ineffectual and somewhat unattractive figure.

Crowned as Henry I's designated successor in 1059, Philip was only eight years old when his father died in 1060. Until 1067 France was under the guardianship of Baldwin V count of Flanders, the young king's uncle. The Fleury chronicle praises Baldwin as a prudent administrator who dominated the nobility of the realm by wise counsel as well as by force, maintaining peace in France.

Ruling alongside Baldwin as his co-guardian was at first Philip's mother, Anne of Kiev. Her role diminished when in about 1062 she married one of the king's leading vassals, Raoul count of Crépy-en-Valois; the two were then it seems largely absent from court until 1065. Some opprobrium was attached to the union as Raoul was already married, and at the behest of his spurned wife Pope Alexander II threatened him with excommunication. However, this was probably not the major scandal which is often represented. Anne continued to witness royal acts until her death in *c.*1075, and in 1069 she founded an important abbey, Saint-Vincent at Senlis.[25]

Philip, once he had come of age, was soon to break the peace carefully established by his uncle. Normandy was by now a very powerful rival to the crown; with the conquest of England in 1066, William's prestige was immense. Baldwin V's daughter, Matilda of Flanders, was married to William; Baldwin, as regent, had allowed Norman expansion to proceed. Philip clearly saw this as a derogation of royal power, and during the first part of his reign he tried to block further Norman expansion in all possible ways.

In 1070–1 Philip intervened in the war of succession in Flanders (p. 50), an action closely linked with his hostility to Normandy. He initially backed the widow and son of Baldwin VI who were defeated at the battle of Cassel, and he had to accept the victorious Robert the Frisian as count, but he married Robert's step-daughter Bertha, securing his alliance against Normandy, and he also gained Corbie from the transaction. In 1076 he went to the relief of Dol with an army, and prevented William from over-running Brittany. He also had to hold the French Vexin against William. In Henry I's reign the overlordship of this band of territory to the north of Paris, of vital strategic importance, had been granted to Normandy, but in 1075–6 Philip seized it during the minority of Simon of Crépy, count of Valois and the Vexin. William demanded it back, arguing that he was its overlord and not Philip, and in 1087 he invaded it. Having burned Mantes he fell ill and shortly afterwards died.

Meanwhile Philip had been encouraging the divisions in William's family, lending opportunistic support to Robert Curthose in his rebellions against his father. This was to become a favoured ploy of the French kings against their Anglo-Norman rivals. Robert continued to receive Philip's support against William Rufus after

the Conqueror's death, the king extracting from him in return the town of Gisors and substantial sums of money. But Philip had backed the wrong horse, as William Rufus eventually took over Normandy. Although the king drove Rufus out of the Vexin in the 1090s, he did not take the offensive in 1099 when Rufus was heavily preoccupied with problems in Maine. Nor did he help Robert Curthose against Rufus's successor and younger brother, Henry I of England. In 1106 the battle of Tinchebray, where Robert was defeated by Henry, restored the latter to the strong position held by his father and the domination of both England and Normandy.

In the latter part of his reign Philip's preoccupations moved away from politics and warfare. These he left to the son of his first marriage to Bertha of Holland, the future Louis VI of France. Bertha he had tired of and imprisoned; and in 1092 he carried off Bertrada of Montfort, wife of Fulk of Anjou. Almost all the French bishops supported his proposed marriage to her, but the important canonist Ivo of Chartres was amongst a group of ecclesiastics who were strongly against it. Ivo wrote to the king:

> I should neither wish nor would be able to assist at the nuptials to which you call me, unless I knew that you and your wife were divorced by virtue of a decision of a general council, and that you could contract a legitimate marriage with the woman you have chosen. . . . This does not go against the fidelity I owe you, but is in virtue of the highest fidelity of all, for I am convinced that such a union would endanger both your soul and your crown.[26]

The marriage, Ivo thought, would also constitute incest. The bishop was imprisoned for his opposition to the king, and the nuptials were celebrated regardless.

Philip was already in disfavour with the papacy. Pope Gregory VII had quarrelled with him on the issue of elections of bishops in particular (p. 133). Now Urban II took stronger action over the king's personal life. In 1095 the council of Clermont in France excommunicated Philip. Urban and his successor Paschal II continued to hurl anathemas in Philip's direction, but with very little effect, for many French bishops remained behind the king, including Bertrada's brother, the new bishop of Paris.

The disputes raised by Philip's marriage to Bertrada illustrate the potential tension between the political requirements of the high-born laity, for whom marriage was an important tool, and the firm stance taken by the reforming church and its lay supporters on the issues of divorce, bigamy and incest. Ivo of Chartres was in the front line, and helped to inflame the problem. The resulting scandal left Philip with the reputation of a greedy, lecherous adulterer and seducer; in fact his actions would have seemed quite acceptable to many of his contemporaries, a sensible move to produce more heirs and to safeguard the succession.[27]

By 1100 the resolve of the church was beginning to weaken, and moves towards a reconciliation were made. The king promised to compromise over the bishopric of Beauvais, at that time in dispute between a royal and papal candidate, and to put aside Bertrada. In 1104 after further mediation by Ivo of Chartres, he agreed at the

council of Beaugency to repudiate her, both doing public penance. Even though they probably continued to live together after this, Philip's relationship with the papacy from now on was far more friendly. In general, indeed, the disputes of the English kings and the emperors with the holy see were far more acrimonious than those in France, where personal affairs seem to have loomed as large as appointments (investitures) of bishops as issues of contention. Perhaps this is a measure of the relative insignificance of French royal power, but it paved the way for later cooperation between the Capetians and the papacy.

Philip's authority within his royal lands was not particularly strong. In 1080, for example, he was defeated by the castellan Hugh, lord of Le Puiset, and his army routed. Philip had added parts of the Gâtinais to the royal lands in 1067 and Corbie ten years later; he managed to assert a closer control of the Vexin, and in 1101 regained the viscounty of Bourges.[28] Nevertheless, this king's horizons were hardly wider than his father's. He intervened in Normandy which directly threatened his lands to the north, but his only other major involvement was his struggle with the reforming church, which was increasingly influential and powerful in France (pp. 129–130).

Yet despite his largely negative personal qualities, royal power began to show signs of revival during Philip's reign, as some important castellans in the royal principality began to take high office in the royal court. Others could no longer afford to ignore royal power altogether, largely through the vigorous military efforts of Philip's son Prince Louis, the future Louis VI, to dominate the more rebellious among them, as carefully chronicled by Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis (pp. 141–145). On Philip's death in 1108, and burial at Fleury, Louis VI was to continue with these endeavours.

The only early Capetian king whose ambitions went much beyond the Seine and the Loire valleys was Robert the Pious. Although he revived his influence to some extent outside the north of France, little of this proved durable. Indeed, his European schemes were more the product of ambition and enthusiasm than of realism. The horizons of his son Henry I and his grandson Philip I were focused closely on the north of France, their activities largely concerned with their immediate neighbours. Until the final years of Philip's reign, when signs of a revival are evident, in practical terms their royal power was predominately a regional affair.

The foundations of royal power

The royal domain

What was the nature of early Capetian power? Royal power had a number of different components. The king was attributed with sacral authority (pp. 81–83) but more practically he was supported by his domain, his collection of secular and ecclesiastical rights and the lands he held directly. Then he had his principality, the area he dominated, which reached beyond the domain itself. Beyond this, he had a larger and a more theoretical authority in the kingdom. And operating on

all these levels, he had a still rather undeveloped machinery of government, based on his household and important ecclesiastical establishments, which issued charters in his name.

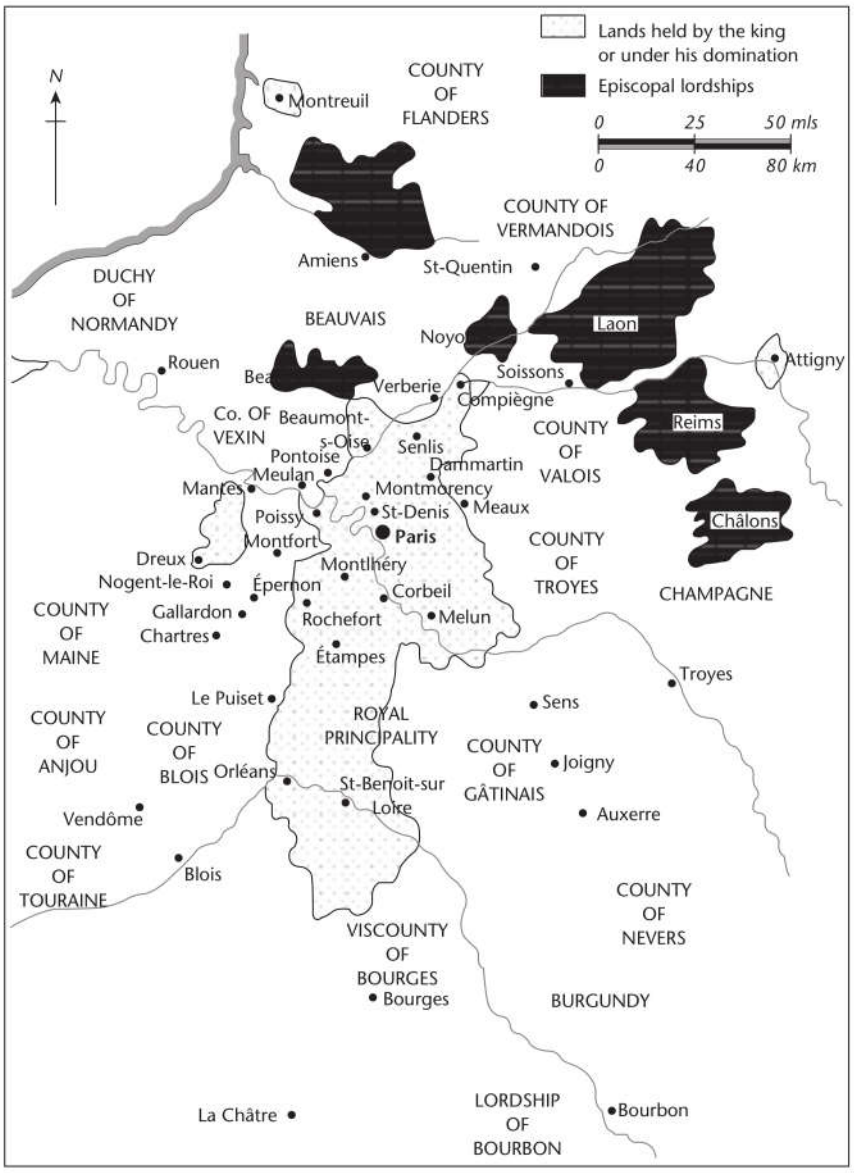
What was the royal domain? This is a question which has long vexed historians of Capetian France. There has been a consensus on its general meaning – those lands or rights directly under royal control – but many different interpretations within this wide definition. In Longnon's 1885 historical atlas of France, there is a map depicting France in 1032. A large area of land around Orléans, Melun, Paris, Rochefort, Poissy, Senlis and Dreux is shaded pink, and is described in the key as the royal domain. Other maps of France in 1154, 1200, 1223, 1241 and 1254 show the expansion of this domain.

This is essentially a territorial approach, and it is one that has a considerable value. Nevertheless there are some problems in depicting the royal domain as a territorial entity, shaded in on a map (e.g., Map 3.1), for in practice, so fragmented was political authority that the king was only as effective as the lands he controlled in person, and the people he could dominate (pp. 108–111). It is only the lands and rights held directly by the king and from which profit was derived, to which many historians now apply the term domain for this period, and clearly their known extent is going to be far narrower – especially during periods of sparse documentation – and less contiguous than the territorial blocs depicted by Longnon.[29]

These powers over castles, villages and estates, forests, towns, religious houses and bishoprics, and rights of justice, tolls and taxes appear on a map as a network, more concentrated in some areas than in others, rather than as a unit of land (Map 3.2 and Map 3.3). First applied to the royal domain by Newman, this approach has also been used for the domains of a number of great nobles. But the royal domain differs strikingly from that of the princes in one way, for whereas the most powerful noble could expect to control only a few bishoprics and monasteries, the king dominated a more substantial proportion of the French bishoprics and a considerable number of ancient and important religious houses. His ecclesiastical influence stretched far wider geographically than the lands and rights he nominally controlled, and this at times gave him an advantage (p. 101).

To what did this collection amount in practice, and where was it located in the eleventh century? Our surviving sources suggest that the secular domain of the king in this period was centred in three related areas. One stretched from the north of the Loire to Paris, another fell between Dreux, Mantes, Saint-Denis and Paris, and a third was round Senlis and Compiègne, stretching up to Soissons and Laon. There were lesser centres at Montreuil, Beauvais, Chaumont-en-Vexin, Sens and Tours (Map 3.2). Not until the twelfth century was there a marked increase in the geographical extent of the secular domain, and not until the thirteenth did it grow dramatically.

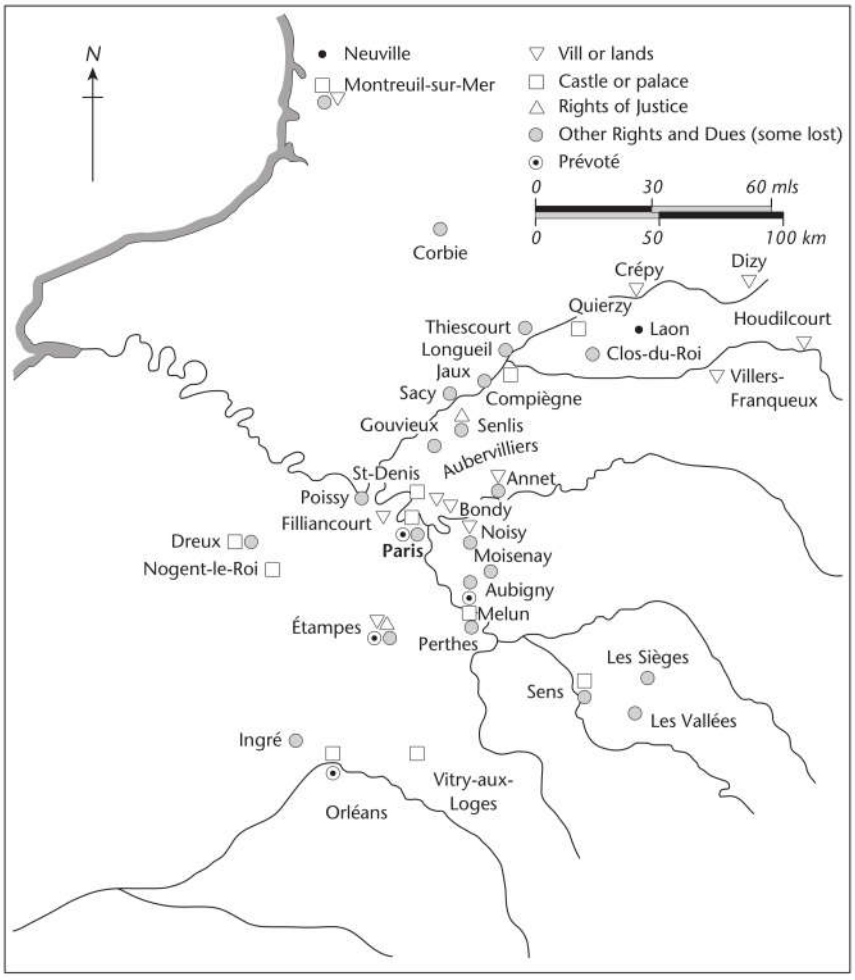
The lands, customs and rights which made up the domain had come to the king in a number of different ways. Some were royal in origin, though by the eleventh century the great majority were also enjoyed by princes, nobles and castellans, as for example forest rights and rights of minting. Others, though also royal in origin,



MAP 3.1 The royal principality in the mid-eleventh century

the king acquired from lesser officials, such as the secular official known as the *viguier*. A third group were seigneurial: the manorial rights enjoyed by all lords. So the domain was a variegated collection held by the Capetians in a number of different guises, as king, count, viscount or *viguier*.

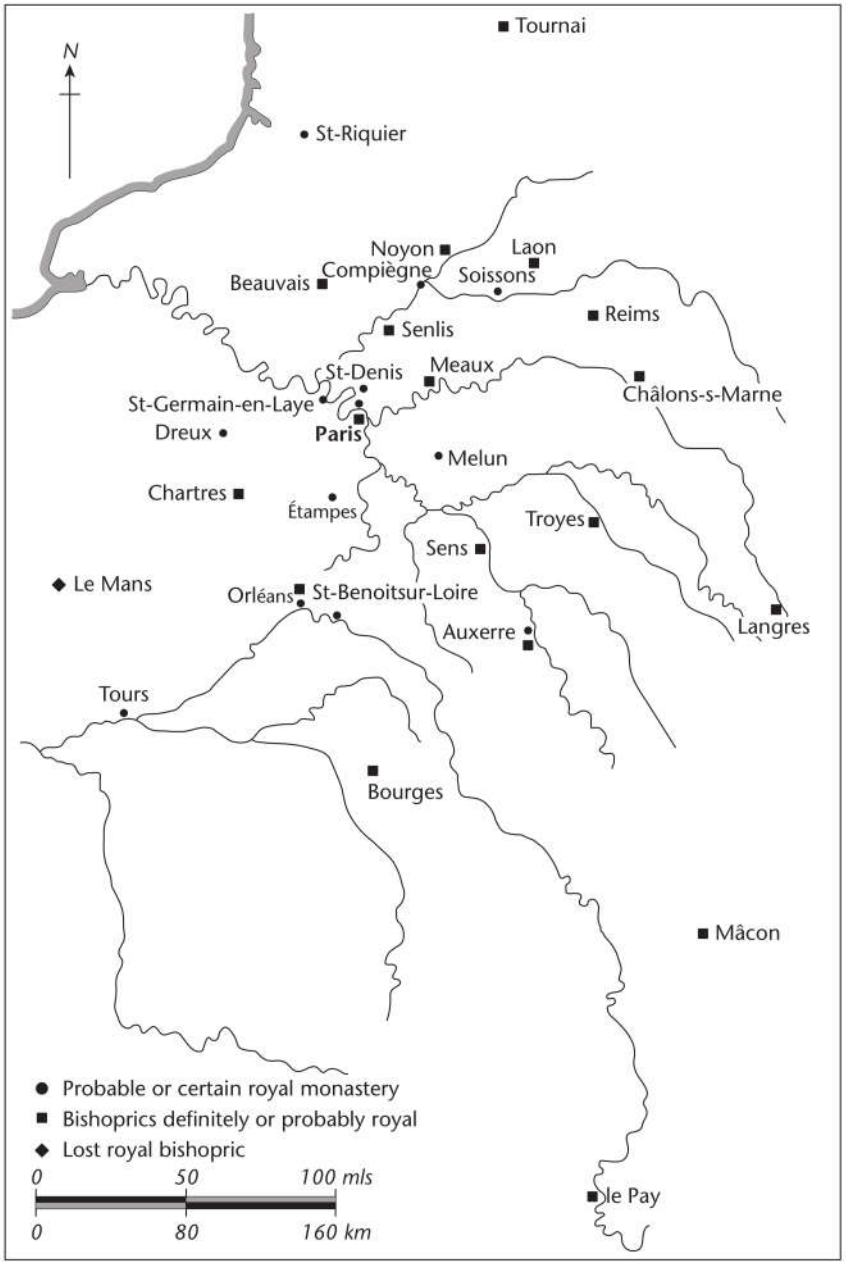
Royal lands were both granted out and added to by the kings during the eleventh century. Robert the Pious gained the counties of Paris, Dreux and Melun,



MAP 3.2 Henry I's secular domain

and arranged for the reversion of part of the town and the county of Sens to the crown after Count Renaud's death; this happened in 1055. Henry I granted Burgundy to his brother Robert and the French Vexin to the duke of Normandy, and he gave the lordship of Corbie to the count of Flanders as the dowry of his sister Adela. Philip I acquired parts of the Gâtinais in *c.*1068, took back the French Vexin in the 1070s, and probably regained Corbie from his first marriage to Bertha of Holland. Between 1097 and 1102 he purchased the viscounty of Bourges from its holder, Odo Arpin, who needed funds to go on crusade, while in 1108 Guy of Montlhéry ceded his lands to the future Louis VI.

In all these cases, the king was involved as 'count' or lord, and he gained or gave away the rights associated with that title, not the entire county or lordship. Land however was a very important element in the secular domain, and the king



MAP 3.3 Henry I's ecclesiastical domain

was in his own right a great landed proprietor. He held many agricultural manors which were cultivated directly for him, some parts of which were in domain, others worked by the peasants for themselves. These peasants provided labour services that were known as the *corvée*, and included the tilling of the land by the

peasants and their animals, and the transportation of the produce. Money rents later replaced some of these services.

Other land was rented out to tenants directly, for which the *champart*, a proportion of the harvest, or the *cens*, a money rent, was paid. The king had the standard seigneurial monopolies over mills for grinding corn and ovens for baking bread, and other miscellaneous powers. An example is *forage*, a domainial right over wine which finds occasional mention in charters. Peasants from the royal domain paid normal, standard dues to the king, but enjoyed certain judicial privileges as royal dependants. The products of the land under direct royal exploitation were gathered in royal *granges* as at Gonesse and Mantes and *celliers* as at Orléans and Argenteuil for use by the royal household or for resale. All these rights were of the kind enjoyed by the nobility and were tied up with the system of cultivation used in northern France.

Through his foresters the king also controlled great areas of forest land, a royal privilege in origin. In forests such as Rouvray, Halatte, Chantilly-Hermenonville, in the Bois-de-Boulogne and the Bois-de-Vincennes, the king enjoyed exclusive hunting rights which made the forests a valuable source of meat. Royal flocks and herds were pastured there and honey and wood gathered. Dues had to be paid by others who used the forests in this way. But these areas were also a valuable source of uncleared and uncultivated land, and the king offered privileges to colonisers or *hôtes*, including judicial rights and exemption from military service, *taille* and *corvée*, in return for part of the profits.

Many palaces and castles were held by the king directly; indeed the rights of castle building, like those over city walls, had originally been exclusively royal. This Carolingian idea survived throughout the early Capetian period, although often in practice other lords took over these powers (pp. 13–14). Castles were of value for defence and for the local administration of royal rights, and like royal palaces provided locations – for example, in Paris, Senlis, Poissy, Étampes, Orléans – for the king and his household to stay in the course of their almost constant travels.

Many towns were also directly under royal control. Some, the new towns or *villeneuves*, were newly founded settlements of royal creation, often intended to open up an area for land colonisation, and given special privileges. Other older settlements began to thrive on an increasing trade and to contain a growing number of burgesses who profited from it. Many such communities were in the twelfth century to seek the semi-autonomy of becoming a self-governing commune. The king granted this status to some in return for a large annual rent, but Paris and Orléans, invaluable strategically, were exceptions here (p. 211).

Some of the rights and revenues belonging to the king had, like the lands he controlled, originated from royal powers. The king had many mints with the monopoly of striking coinage in a given area (Image 3.2), again a right once exclusively royal but in the early Capetian period shared by many lords. Indeed many royal rights were also exercised by other lords, even if the evidence is best for kings.

IMAGE 3.2 Silver penny (*denier*) of Hugh Capet, minted at Beauvais jointly with the bishop. Note the Carolingian monogram still represented on the coin

From A. Engel and R. Serrure, *Traité de numismatique du moyen age*, ii (Paris, 1894), 357

These rights could be lucrative. For instance, the king and his entourage claimed the right to hospitality (*gite*) in castles and monasteries controlled either by him or sometimes even by a local noble. Monasteries such as Saint-Rémi at Sens were prepared to pay heavily to be freed from this imposition, giving the king land or a fixed annual payment. An allied right was the *droit de prise*, which enabled food to be purloined for the royal household and the king's horses and hounds either very cheaply or free of charge.

Many roads where tolls or *péage* for safe-conducts could be levied came under royal authority. Philip I, for example, allowed the profits of a road near the monastery of Saint-Martin-des-Champs to be used to help to support the hospital of the religious house. *Rouage* was levied on wheeled vehicles and *transit* paid on passage by road or by water. Such rights could be held in full or a proportion of them could be granted out as a concession. The king also often controlled fairs or markets. Philip I, for example, gave to the city of Orléans half the profits of the fair held there on 1 November. He could regulate the price of sale of various merchandise, for example wine, and also levied another tax, the *hauban*, on all those carrying out a trade or profession. Furthermore, since he was seen as the protector of various Jewish communities, he was able to levy valuable dues from them. Philip I gave revenues extracted from the Jews at Tours to his wife Bertrada.

The profits of a number of other dues and taxes were also raised by the king. Tithes paid to the parish priest by his parishioners, a tenth of their produce intended for his support, had often fallen into lay hands by the eleventh century. Like other lords, the king therefore levied part or all of the tithes of numerous churches. Rents, the *cens*, were furthermore payable to the king for rights as well as for land, as for example for holding tolls or *prévôtés*, the administrative offices of the domain. The king might at times pay *cens* himself on lands or rights leased from other lords.

From the later eleventh century the Capetians began like other lords to levy tallage, a personal tax that was by origin a forced payment, of which the yields were

considerable, demanded from free and unfree alike. Over the unfree, the king had a number of other seigneurial rights, including *mainmorte*, which enabled him to seize movable property on the death of a peasant, together with immovables if there was no heir. *Chevage* was a tax of four pennies paid by all unfree persons each year.

One of the most important ways in which kings raised revenues was through justice. The precise sense in which the word itself, *justitia*, is used in royal charters, is sometimes hard to discern. At times it appears to signify justice in an abstract sense, and at others, the dues culled from it. The interchangeability of the two, however, reflects the widely accepted view that justice could be a profitable affair. It was not always paired with landholding, for an estate could be granted out with or without judicial rights, or with the reservation of some men but not of others.

By the mid-eleventh century, in many parts of France local justice appears in the sources as predominantly a matter for the private jurisdictions of the castellans and lesser nobles. As a rule of thumb, the castellans and great ecclesiastical establishments heard capital cases including murder, treason, theft, rape and arson, later included in high justice, while minor offences were tried in local courts. Whether there is a continuity between Carolingian major causes, reserved for the king and his agent, and this high justice is not clear; the latter may be linked with the emergence of the peace and truce of God and the obligations they imposed on the greater nobles and ecclesiastics.[30]

In any case, the exercise of justice was very important for the king. The royal court at times sat as a court of law, acting in both a royal and a domainial capacity according to the cases which came before it, without making any distinction between them. To be subject to the royal ban as opposed to seigneurial justice was clearly considered a great privilege; in 1046 for example, Henry I granted it to the favoured house of canons at Étampes. In 1008 Robert the Pious had reserved judicial rights in Saint-Denis and its locality for himself, but generally such royal enclaves were limited in size. In some areas the king controlled the *vicaria*, a Carolingian office which involved administrative as well as judicial functions. In practice the king's powers were probably much the same whether he held a *vicaria* or the ban (judicial rights) in a particular place, but the variations in terminology underline the diversity in judicial rights and practices, which stemmed in part from their varying origins – royal, customary, manorial or vicarial; the pattern was not to stabilise until much later.

Clearly the collection of lands and rights which made up the domain needed organising to be exploited to the advantage of the king and retained for his use. One method of doing this was the direct one; the king and his entourage travelled between royal castles and manors, consuming their produce, supervising their administration and holding courts. Royal power was also delegated to local officials. There are references to viscounts and to *viguiers* in many early Capetian charters, but some of these references are merely the work of scribes copying from much earlier models. In many areas these officials were fast disappearing, to be replaced by new agents of royal power, the provosts or *prévôts*, first found in the mid-eleventh century.

By Louis VI's reign most of the royal lands had been divided into a number of *prévôtés*, the areas which *prévôts* controlled. In these, their functions, both financial and judicial, were wide-ranging, and they were able to extend both royal rights and the profits they made from them. Occasionally one of their number opposed the king, and like some of the earlier castellan families whose powers had originally been derived from public offices, they could pose a considerable threat to law and order in the Ile de France. Loyal *prévôts* by contrast proved crucial in the extension of royal power in the districts they controlled.

The ecclesiastical domain

As well as having a network of secular rights and lands under his control, the king exercised valuable and important powers over the church, and the support of the episcopate was essential for the coronation of Hugh Capet and the survival of the Capetian monarchy. This network was far more wide-ranging geographically than the king's secular domain, for the crown retained influence over all or some of the bishops and monasteries in areas where other forms of royal power were weak.

Charlemagne and Louis the Pious had been the effective masters of the church in west Francia, and while their Capetian successors no longer exercised the same overall control, the early Capetians still controlled more bishoprics and key monasteries than any other great lord in France, although this influence could still be dependent on propitious local circumstances to be exercised in practice. Over these establishments the king could claim regalian rights, the power to hold their estates during vacancies resulting from the death of the bishop or abbot, and to administer the lands for his own profit. Prebends and other offices falling vacant at this time would have their new holders nominated by the king. This made them a valuable source of patronage to be given to deserving royal servants.

Often too, in the case of bishoprics, the king could dispose of the chattels of the defunct incumbent. Then he would 'elect' the new bishop, sometimes selling the office to the highest bidder, and invest him with the ring and staff, symbol of his lands and dignity. Both these practices were condemned by the ecclesiastical reformers of the later eleventh century (p. 132). Another area of opposition to royal rights over bishoprics and abbeys came from rival lords with their own candidates. The king nevertheless managed regularly to exercise his authority within his ecclesiastical domain into the twelfth century.

In respect of royal authority over bishoprics, three categories may be distinguished: the royal domains proper (Paris, Orléans, Senlis and Sens), the region to the north-east (Amiens, Beauvais, Châlons, Langres, Laon, Noyon, Reims, Soissons and Thérouanne) and, third, the strategic outliers, enclaves within the territorial principalities (Auxerre, Bourges, Chartres, Le Mans, Le Puy, Mâcon, Meaux, Tours, Troyes) – although there was some fluctuation in the number of bishoprics dominated by the early Capetians and in the extent of their control, especially in the case of those falling into the last category.

In the first, the Robertian patrimony, the Capetian kings exercised significant authority over the episcopal cities, leaving the bishops little independent power beyond the spiritual. The bishoprics in the second category, the former domain of the Carolingian kings, enjoyed a certain geographical and ecclesiastical unity: under the early Capetians, the bishops strove to free themselves from lay authority, whether royal or comital, and to establish episcopal seigneuries. Here, as also in the third group of 'outlying' royal bishoprics, the role of the king was limited to the exercise of regalian rights when circumstances permitted. But as the episcopal seigneuries increasingly looked to the monarchy for support against other lay powers, the kings were able to exploit them more and more for both political and material support.

Robert the Pious in fact enjoyed considerable success with the policy of the systematic replacement of counts, whose offices had become hereditary, with bishops, who could not make their office hereditary. Rather, the king retained influence over the appointment of new bishops, thus maintaining close, albeit indirect, control of these areas. Robert the Pious created or encouraged the development of episcopal seigneuries at Auxerre, Beauvais, Bourges, Langres, Noyon, Orléans, Reims and Sens. The benefits of this system to the crown proved only to be short-lived, however, in the face of the papal reform movement of the next few decades.[31]

The monasteries are less well documented, and exactly what made an abbey royal is not easy to define. Lot and Pfister considered royal houses to encompass all those monasteries to which either charters confirming their possessions or safeguards, giving protection, had been granted.[32] But the first category of such grants often merely backed up the foundation or donation of another patron, and although they could be given to royal monasteries, clearly not all the houses to which they were issued were necessarily royal. The second category of royal grants, the safeguards or immunities, were of varying significance. Sometimes they amounted to the promise of protection only for a small outlying parcel of monastic land, perhaps one situated near to an area of strong royal influence. At other times they could involve complete royal protection for the house and all its lands, and this is the criterion for a monastery in the ecclesiastical domain of the king offered by Newman.[33]

To be the lord of a monastery the king had to combine the functions of founder and patron. The early Capetians controlled a considerable number of monasteries in this way for a number of reasons. Hugh Capet had held one group before he became king, and they fell naturally to his successors. Another group of houses formerly under the domination of the Carolingian kings passed to the new royal dynasty. These included Fleury (Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire) and Saint-Corneille at Compiègne. A third group consisted of the foundations or refoundations of the Capetians themselves, such as Saint-Martin-des-Champs. Sometimes too the foundations of other lords could be given a substantial donation and then be brought under royal control by the annexation of the role of founder to the crown. In other cases the king became the patron by bringing the monastery under royal protection, with no donation involved; this was not a common occurrence.

It is not always clear in what capacity the king was acting as a protector of particular monasteries. In the ninth century he had had a *tuitio*, a guardianship over all monastic houses, but by the eleventh century many had found other protectors, their *avoués* or advocates. This office had grown out of that held by a low-ranking lay servant who had protected the monasteries in the ninth and tenth centuries. Local nobles had often taken it over and used it as a way of dominating the religious house and its valuable estates, especially in the north and east of the kingdom.[34] The king was sometimes called in by such communities to defend them against their own advocates.

In spite of these nuances, it is clear that the extent of the monastic domain was considerable under the first Capetians. Many monasteries, such as Fleury, Saint-Aignan at Orléans and Saint-Riquier, remained under royal influence continuously between 987 and 1108. There is evidence that between 40 and 50 were at some time royal during this period. As Map 3.3 indicates, Henry I's ecclesiastical domain stretched into Burgundy, Berry, the Loire Valley and Picardy, an area far wider than that in which his secular rights were concentrated.

Royal monasteries enjoyed a number of privileges: they were subject to royal justice alone, but enjoyed judicial privileges in their own lands, and they were free from the authority of the local bishop. The king was their direct controller, and this in practice gave him regalian rights, as in the case of the bishoprics.

The early Capetians are sometimes portrayed as saintly protectors of the monasteries. Certainly they defended a number of religious houses, but others they exploited ruthlessly. An example of the latter is the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, in the Middle Ages just outside the walls of Paris. Founded in the Merovingian period, by the ninth century its lands were very considerable and scattered throughout France, as the polyptych or estate survey of Abbot Irmino shows. From the late ninth century however, it gradually lost most of these lands. The first blow was the Viking invasions, when the mother house was destroyed and had to be rebuilt, and many of its estates were devastated. The next fell more gradually, under the lay abbacy of Duke Hugh the Great. He granted out a number of parcels of fisc, including Combs, Nogent, Villemeux and Palaiseau to his vassals.

King Robert the Pious further dissipated the abbey's estates, using some, including Beynes and Maule, for the construction of castles then granted to vassals, intended to protect Paris from Odo II of Blois. New centres of the alienated fiscs grew up to replace the old, and new patterns of landholding replaced those represented in the polyptych. In about 1025 William of Volpiano was called in by the king to refound and reform the monastery, and from this time onwards some of the former lands and churches of the house, generally those in the Ile de France, were restored to Saint-Germain. Henry I was however unable to give back whole *villae*, and contented himself with the grant of the church of Saint-Martin at Dreux. The recovery of the abbey's estates was slow, and the whole process reveals the extent to which ecclesiastical estates could be exploited and regranted by the king and the nobles in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[35] Saint-Germain was nevertheless an important cultural centre in the eleventh century, with a *scriptorium* which

produced fine illuminated manuscripts. The rebuilding of its church was begun, and the tower and the nave with its fine capitals are an indication of the quality of the craftsmanship in the Paris area in this period.

The royal principality

The material side of royal power was based on the royal domain, the sum total of the king's lands and rights, but there was a political and territorial side to royal authority in the Ile de France and Orléans regions as well. The king was recognised as having power in the geographical area which surrounded and included the domain and this may, because of its political and social similarities to other French principalities of the eleventh century, conveniently be termed the royal principality. It was centred on the counties and viscounties held directly by the king, the Parisis, Orléanais, Etampais, Châtrais, Pincerais and Melunais which had been the core of the Robertian lands, and the débris of the Carolingian domain, including the royal palaces of Attigny, Compiègne and Verberie. Then there were the important episcopal counties such as Laon, Reims and Châlons, dominated by the king, together with other episcopal and monastic estates in the ecclesiastical domain.

Around these lands was another group of counties and lordships in the king's orbit or *mouvance*, held directly from him. These included the Vendômois, Corbonnais (Mortagne and Bellême), Gâtinais, Melunais, Arcésis (Arcis-sur-Aube and Ramerupt), Valois (including Crépy), Soissonais, the French Vexin, Beaumont-sur-Oise, Beauvaisis, Breteuil, Amiénois, Vermandois, Ponthieu and Vimeu, Sens and Joigny, the viscounty of Bourges and possibly the lordship of Bourbon (Map 3.1). Although some of the lands were scattered, they were centred on the Paris and Orléans areas. Here the king was recognised as the major authority.

At the heart of this position was the legacy of the Capetians' ancestors, the Robertians, who had built up a considerable collection of lands in northern France in the ninth and tenth centuries. Robert 'the Strong' had been granted lands between the Seine, the Loire and the Mayenne. Odo had added estates around Paris, Orléans, Étampes, Melun and la Châtre. Although he was rivalled by Normandy to the north and Anjou to the west, Hugh the Great managed to consolidate his lands by playing off his rivals, and this his Capetian descendants continued to do.

In 943 Hugh was granted the title of *dux Francorum*, duke of the Franks, which implied an overall authority in Francia. This area, which included Normandy, Anjou and Maine, was one of the three principal divisions of the kingdom in the mid-tenth century; Flodoard said that when in 954 Lothar was crowned, this was done with the consent of the great men of the realm from Burgundy, Aquitaine and Francia.[36] However, the *dux Francorum* had no real authority over the outlying areas which were themselves forming as principalities, such as Normandy and Anjou, and the idea of the duchy in its widest geographical extent began to disappear. In 987 its duke became king, and by about 1000 the two offices seem to have

fused. The name *Francia* used in its narrower sense was by now normally applied only to the central area of the former duchy, where the lands of the king and of the counts of Blois lay, and by the twelfth century it was to be used to describe the royal principality alone.

What is more, the Robertian lands that the Capetian kings inherited had not formed a political unit as coherent as Normandy or Flanders, and although the kings were far from being lesser lords, they did not control and dominate their own principality as effectively as William the Conqueror did Normandy. Until 987 the Carolingians still held land interspersed with that of the Robertians, as too did important and independent nobles. Most notable amongst these was Bouchard the Venerable, count of Vendôme, whose life was written 50 years after his death by Odo of Saint-Maur. He held the counties of Melun and Paris as well as Vendôme, and obtained the castle and lordship of Corbeil by marriage. In 1006, an aged man, he retired to the monastery of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, and his lands were divided up, the king resuming the county of Paris.

In the early eleventh century, independent castellans with bannal lordships began to appear in many parts of the royal principality. Some of these new lords marked their importance by assuming comital titles at the expense of older political structures, as when the earlier counts of Chambly were replaced by the counts of Beaumont-sur-Oise. Other new counts in the early eleventh century were Manasses of Dammartin, Robert of Rochefort-en-Yvelines and Galeran, count of Meulan. These titles reflected the importance that these new castles, architecturally unglamorous but effectively fortified permanent residences, had for their identity as well as for their power.

In this period, it was these castellans not the Capetians who wielded effective political power in areas which surrounded and interspersed with those of the king and his loyal vassals – they were often, indeed, his disloyal vassals – and local wars and violence flourished. This was not confined to the royal lands, but was the pattern which prevailed in the Mâconnais, Maine, Anjou and Poitou as well as much of the south, and it is a clear symptom of weak central authority.

Although the centres of power were new, their holders normally were not, for most were descendants of the earlier comital families of the area, who because of the weakness of royal control were able to consolidate an augmented and private authority based around their own castles and customs. Many such castellans, like the 'sires' of Montlhéry, did not take the comital title at all. This family carved out a lordship from the lands of the bishopric of Paris, while the Montmorency and Montfort families held lands formerly belonging to the king. As in many areas of France, these estates originated in quite legitimate grants of lands – but these figures became increasingly independent from their lords and were able to consolidate their own holdings at their lords' expense. Although some ecclesiastical lands in the area, like the royal estates, suffered from this process, many religious establishments in the Ile de France also managed to extend privileges of immunity to their lands and to consolidate their own bannal lordships within the patchwork of estates which was forming.[37]

The process began slowly. In the reign of Hugh Capet the Meulan lordship appeared, and then Montmorency around the year 1000, followed by Gallardon, Nogent-le-Roi, Montfort-l'Amaury and Epernon. At this time too a large collection of lands was built up by Geldouin of Breteuil in the Vexin, Beauvaisis and other areas between the Seine and Somme, but this never became a permanent holding. Robert the Pious was obliged to fight the castellans of the Beauce, but these independent nobles did not become an acute problem until Henry I's reign, when lesser castellanies multiplied. Adulterine castles proliferated, and the whole group of castellan families, as they intermarried, spawned further cadet offshoots.

The royal succession dispute of 1031–2 greatly weakened royal power in the region, and the ambitious Odo II of Blois, by drawing many of these families into dependence on him, posed a considerable threat to the king. Henry managed to defeat him, and by 1040 the crisis was over. Nevertheless, for the rest of the eleventh century royal power remained relatively circumscribed and much of the principality was dominated by powerful and established castellan families, such as the Montlhéry and Montmorency, and those who rose from knightly origins such as the Garlande.

Many castellans continued to ignore or defy the king. In 1080 Hugh of Le Puiset defeated the royal army in the field, and Philip I also had considerable problems with the Montlhéry (Image 3.3). Philip managed eventually to acquire the castle there by marrying his son with Bertrada de Montfort to the daughter and

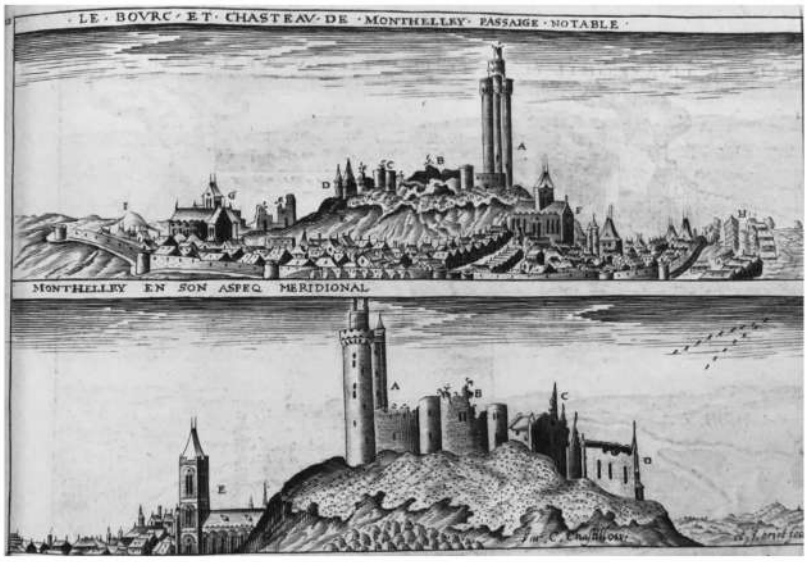


IMAGE 3.3 From castellan threat to royal asset: the castle of Montlhéry, rebuilt twelfth–thirteenth centuries

From C. Chastillon, *Topographie Françoise ou représentations de plusiers villes, bourgs, chasteaux . . . de France* (Paris, 1655), no. 64

heiress of Guy Troussel, lord of Montlhéry. Abbot Suger reports that Philip said to Louis VI when on his deathbed: 'Beware, my son, keep watch and guard that tower [of Montlhéry]; the distress I have suffered from it has nearly made an old man out of me'.[38]

By the end of Philip I's reign there were signs of future royal recovery in the principality. The royal entourage was composed mainly of lesser men from the area, but the major offices in the royal household were now held by leading castellans of the Ile de France. As a result they had wielded much influence at the royal court, but this at least gave him a following from a higher social stratum (p. 115). Prince Louis's wars against some of the more independent castellans had begun to re-establish law and order, to revive royal prestige and widen effective royal justice. Although as King Louis VI he still had a long way to go, by 1108 royal power was beginning to make itself felt in the royal principality.

Royal government and the royal entourage

Royal authority was limited during the first century or so of Capetian rule in France, and began to make a slow recovery only at the end of Philip I's reign. This pattern emerges from an assessment of the politics of the reigns, from an analysis of the developments in the domain and the principality, and from an examination of the relationship of the king and the territorial princes. It shows up too in the acts issued by the king's chancery or drawn up by ecclesiastical establishments when they were the recipients of royal charters.[39]

The form, style and content of royal charters, our principal evidence, are all of considerable significance. Charters drawn up in monasteries often contain valuable background information, and can also reflect royal pretensions just as much as those produced by the royal chancery. The king's charters also often had multiple witness lists, and the content of these is of interest, for they catalogue the royal entourage, the king's following, on the day the act was drawn up. Taken collectively, the individuals who can be identified within the lists can give an idea of the area and of the social group from which the entourage was drawn. An analysis of the beneficiaries likewise shows the areas where nobles and churches turned to the king for land grants, confirmations and safeguards, and is one way of measuring the geographical extent of royal influence.

Between 987 and the middle of the eleventh century, the form taken by royal charters (Source 3.1) underwent a change. Carolingian *acta* had usually been witnessed only by the king and by the chancellor, and so too were most early Capetian charters. However, charters prepared by the beneficiaries of a royal grant increasingly combined some elements of conservatism, such as florid but anachronistic expressions of royal majesty, with new forms influenced by private *acta*, notably lists of named witnesses. The Carolingian-style royal diploma continued to be used extensively, but the multiple witness charter gradually gained ground, so that for the whole period 995 to 1025 it comprised a third of all royal acts. This includes the charters of nobles witnessed by the king, again a new development.

SOURCE 3.1 CHARTER OF HENRY I, 1058

In archives across France as elsewhere in the Latin West, there survive in their thousands medieval sheets of parchment known as charters (from the Latin *carta*). These sheets are records of legal transactions of all kinds, but especially transactions involving property: grants, sales and exchanges of land. Most

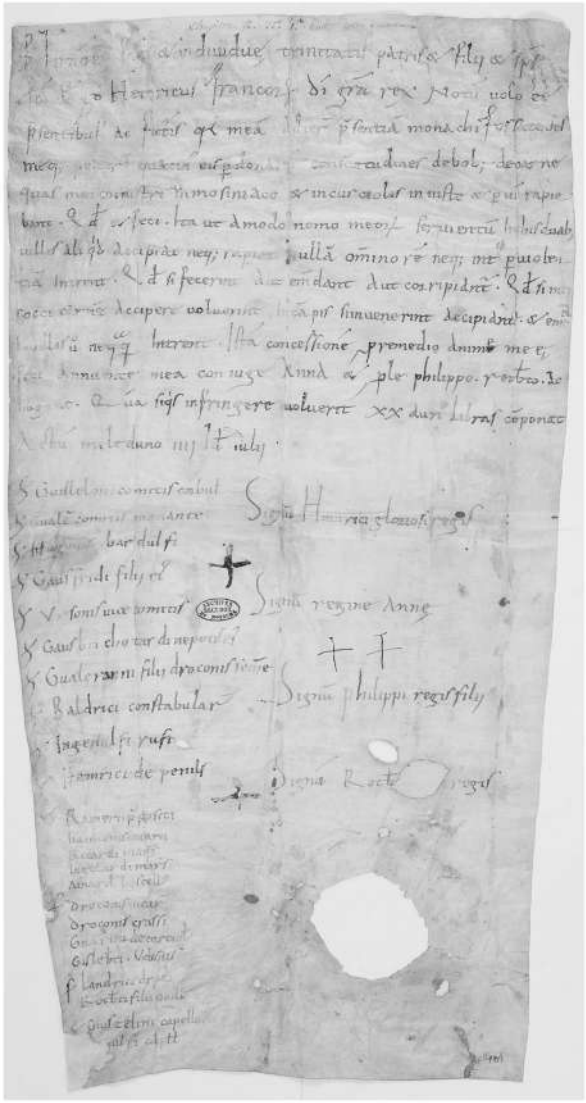


IMAGE 3.4 Charter of Henry I of 1058

Archives Nationales, AE II 101

of them involve a church, probably because churches (especially monasteries) were well-placed to store these documents, which they often copied into books known as cartularies, thereby preserving many more texts whose originals are now lost.

The value of these sources for historians has long been recognised: they have been used to track the careers of individuals, to trace changes in family structure, and to measure the shifting power of kings and other office-holders, as well as to understand the role of writing in medieval society. Increasingly their textual contents are undergoing large-scale software-assisted analysis, but close study of the original parchment also brings rewards to historians interested in scribes, in medieval archival practices and in how these objects were used in medieval society. Shown here is a royal charter of Henry I of 1058, in favour of the abbey of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés. Although informal in layout, it is regarded as authentic. It originally had a seal attached to validate it, now missing; but the marks of Henry's queen, Anne, and his sons, and a long list of witnesses from the royal entourage are also provided, strengthening its efficacy.[40]

These developments have been read to indicate the decline of royal power, but they must be set against features of a Carolingian style of royal authority which continued into the eleventh century. Some of the charters in the older format contained mentions of the king's *fideles*, his faithful men, with whose consent they were said to be given, and this is an earlier form of words.

It is clear too that the Capetian kings continued to hold gatherings of the greater nobility, ecclesiastical and lay, which were in a sense the continuation of the Carolingian *placita*, the royal councils where the king presided over his leading subjects who ratified his decisions. Examples include the synod of Chelles which condemned the murder of Hugh of Beauvais, or the consecration of the future Henry I.

Lemarignier suggested that this impression of continuity is not wholly misleading, for royal government under Robert the Pious still seemed largely dominated by the aristocracy, and especially by the episcopate, as it had been a century before. But by the 1020s this was increasingly becoming a façade. From that date, charters with multiple witness lists increased rapidly and the Carolingian style diploma was gradually eclipsed. Bishops and counts still appeared as witnesses but their names were intermingled with, and sometimes overwhelmed by, those of the castellans and knights from the Ile de France. The few greater nobles appeared as *fideles*, but the lesser men witnessed the *acta*, it seems, more in recognition of their local power than as a sign of their obedience to the king. Charters, then, were validated by the powerful men of a given area rather than the vassals of the king.

The traditional role of the archbishops of Reims as archchancellors of France also fell gradually into disuse after the death of Archbishop Adalbero: the chancellor was now only one amongst a plethora of other witnesses. Another important

development was that customs, *consuetudines*, are frequently referred to in the place of royal or public power. In general there was little apart from his title to distinguish the king in his charters from a great noble or even a castellan.

Royal charters can be read as showing a further slow decline in royal authority during the reign of Henry I and the early years of Philip I. Henry managed to consolidate his power in the royal principality to some extent, but his field of action was limited. He was a king with the outlook of a territorial prince (pp. 35–36) and his localised influence is reflected in the more limited areas from which the beneficiaries of royal charters came.

Whereas under Robert the Pious, the majority had been granted in the regions bounded by Tours, Montreuil and Châlons, with some few in outlying areas, under Robert's successors fewer went to the regions of the lower Loire and Burgundy, Normandy and Flanders, and their concentration upon Orléans and even more upon Paris intensified. The gradual disappearance of the Carolingian style diploma also continued. By the early years of Philip I's reign about seven-eighths of surviving charters with royal connections were either issued by the king, ending with a multiple witness list, now appearing for the first time in documents produced by the royal chancery, or involved the king as one witness of a private act.

Bishops and counts continue to appear among these witnesses, and on some few occasions they are the only group from which the witnesses are drawn. One example is in 1048 when a charter of protection to Saint-Médard at Soissons was validated by two archbishops, ten bishops and eleven great nobles. This, it seems, marked a general alliance against the Emperor Henry III. In 1077 the grant of the monastery of Saint-Symphorien at Autun to Fleury was witnessed by a similarly large and noble concourse, which probably shows an alliance against William of Normandy.

Nevertheless, although bishops, princes and lesser counts were still appearing fairly frequently as witnesses, castellans and knights showed up more and more often as lists grew in length. The area from which they came gradually shrank to the Ile de France and its surrounding regions (the royal principality) and if a charter affected a particular locality, often local men appeared as its witnesses. By Philip I's reign, castellans of small lordships benefited from royal *acta*, and they also often appear as witnesses. So too do knights, frequently lords of only one village, and the overwhelming impression of the royal entourage during this period is that it consisted of local men. These are described as *testes*, witnesses, rather than the *fideles* of the king.

After about 1077 this pattern, which had remained broadly stable for 50 years or so, began to change somewhat. In the wake of the papal reforms, the bishops appeared as witnesses markedly less often. The greater nobility, too, almost disappeared. Burgesses begin to be found as witnesses alongside the castellans and knights – perhaps a sign of expanding urban economies, but perhaps also showing that the composition of the entourage had fallen to a striking degree of localisation and social mediocrity. The charters also suggest that Philip I's itinerary was much more limited in extent than that of Robert the Pious.[41] Where Robert had travelled extensively

in Burgundy, Aquitaine and Flanders, and went on pilgrimage to Rome twice and through the Languedoc and the Massif Central once, Philip, apart from one spell in Poitou, remained in the Paris region.

However, analysis of other aspects of the form and content of royal *acta* shows royal government in a somewhat more positive light. Guyotjeannin, more cautious on whether shifts in power can be discerned from changing charter forms, has demonstrated that under Henry I and Philip I the royal chancery was a repository of Carolingian tradition, but was at the same time perfectly capable of innovation and creativity. Around 1050, the Carolingian *précepte mineur* was revived, briefer and less formal than the royal charter, and used for matters of less importance, principally manumission of slaves and specific grants of rights or immunities. Another innovation was the *mandement*, similar to the Anglo-Norman writ, appearing from 1089.

The royal charters proper continued to begin with a preamble, drawn from Carolingian precedents, which invoked the king's majesty and his legislative authority. Giordanengo has asserted that this was not empty rhetoric but reflected the ideology of kingship shared by the early Capetian kings and their chancellors. Meanwhile, Koziol has argued that the appearance of witnesses in royal charters indicates not weakness but a new ideology of consensus, though this could be a case of the kings making the best of the situation.[42]

There are also early signs of the future recovery of royal power. The Capetian kings first seem to have had their own constable and butler in the 1040s, and the other household officials, the seneschal and the chamberlain appeared soon afterwards. By the 1070s they had become prominent in the entourage, and often witnessed charters in company with only a few, or no other witnesses, a trend which would continue and strengthen. Whereas originally these officials had come from the lesser nobility, now they were leading castellans of the principality, descended from lines such as the Montlhéry-Rochefort and the Riche, or from newly risen but powerful families such as the Garlande. Their domination was to be a problem for Louis VI, but under Philip I their growing importance marked the emergence of a following for the king from a higher social stratum. The king, it seems, was beginning to govern with the counsel of his great household officials. The charters themselves were also written in a more consistent form and style.

On a local level, too, the charters suggest that royal power was slowly increasing from the later eleventh century. The royal *prévôts*, whose offices may have had a public rather than an estate management character, begin to show up as the witnesses of some local *acta*, and then from 1089 they start to receive *mandements*, terse instructions from the king for action in their administrative areas. At the end of Philip I's reign these acts become quite frequent, and they are an unambiguous sign of a reviving royal power in the Ile de France.

Royal justice was also becoming more effective, so that by the end of Philip's reign his son, Prince Louis, was able to pass judgement on many nobles in the area and to use force to back it up. In the early years of the twelfth century the king's

power was still weak, and his principality was still dominated in many areas by the castellans. There were however indications that royal power was beginning slowly to revive, both in the principality, and in a wider area in the north of the kingdom.

The king and the princes

Early in the eleventh century, when Abbo, abbot of Fleury, went to visit the abbey of La Réole in Gascony, he boasted to his companions: 'Here I am more powerful than the king of France, for no one in this region fears his domination'.[43] The links of Gascony with the French monarchy were indeed not strong, but this comment would have been equally applicable for Barcelona and the Languedoc. In the eleventh century, the papacy was more powerful in the south of France than the king, and the church had taken on the role of keeper of the peace. Very few charters of Hugh Capet and Robert the Pious found their way to the south, and the territorial princes of the region never appeared as witnesses of royal acts. Likewise the count of Brittany was not in evidence as a royal follower, and the duke of Aquitaine and the counts of Auvergne and La Marche only rarely so. In much of northern and central France, however, the king's presence was more strongly felt, and he was closely involved in the changing patterns of alliances which involved the dukes of Normandy, the counts of Anjou and of Blois-Champagne.

What was the nature of the king's connections with these territorial princes? It has long been recognised, notably by Lot and Fawtier, that throughout the eleventh century the king's place as suzerain was widely recognised and that the princes sometimes swore fidelity or loyalty to him.[44] But what did these actions really imply? Although the vocabulary used to describe bonds of personal commendation remained relatively unchanged during the early Capetian period, it is very clear that the implications of swearing oaths of homage and fealty in 1200 were something rather different from what they had been in 1000, and that considerable changes had already taken place by 1100.

In the early eleventh century, fealty was paid, it seems, quite regularly in many parts of northern France, but it did not automatically create a social hierarchy (p. 33). In the Mâconnais the castellans swore loyalty to one another as a sign of alliance and of peace, not of subordination.[45] In some cases, oaths were sworn on the borders of the lands of the lord and the vassal, perhaps a matter of convenience in part, but also emphasising the relative equality of the two contracting parties, as with the dukes of Normandy and the kings of France before about 1060.[46]

Long chains of land tenure were rare, while multiple ties of commendation were common, vassalage and the grant of a benefice being seen in terms of a personal bond.[47] The king and the princes seem in practice to have differed very little in their use of oaths of loyalty from the castellans and lesser nobles. Loyalty and service were sworn by the princes when they were in alliance with the king, but the promises were forgotten when they were not.

However, in the later eleventh century changes began to take place in French society, as both the idea and the reality of social hierarchy were fostered

by the church.[48] This was reflected in changes in the meaning and implications of oaths of loyalty. Oaths sworn in exchange for grants of land began increasingly to involve everyone, including the vassal's men. Chains of vassals began to form as the lord's position was strengthened by the use of liege homage, which put him above the other lords of an individual. This also strengthened the obligation of the vassal to give aid and counsel, formalising what had been more of a personal bond.

These developments strengthened the king's position at the summit of the hierarchy, emphasised in writings such as those of Abbot Suger (pp. 196–203), which glorified the crown. The growth of the monarchy's power was also closely connected with a new aggressive attitude on the part of Louis VI inside the royal lands, and with his increasing reputation outside them for kingly activities, such as dispensing justice and protecting churches (p. 196); these did not depend on sworn oaths of loyalty or grants of benefices. It had already begun to revive noticeably in Philip I's reign, however, with some foretaste of this at the end of Henry I's rule. Whereas the princes had treated the kings as equals up to about 1050, they began more fully to acknowledge, if not always to carry out, their obligations to Philip I and Louis VI.

The changing attitudes of the princes to swearing homage and performing military service are two useful indicators of the revival of royal power, although the latter appears to have revived before the former. In his letter to the king of 1023 (p. 45) Odo II of Blois emphasises he has regularly paid service to Robert, thus fully recognising his obligations.[49] In fact this was only done when he was in alliance with the king, and it was ignored when he was neutral or hostile. The dukes of Normandy also provided military service in 1005–6, 1031 and 1048, but again as a mark of alliance.

Yet in the later eleventh century the princes began to give service on a more regular basis, even when they had not done homage to the king and had not been to court. In 1071 the Norman duke, William the Conqueror, sent a small force to Flanders in support of Philip I, even though he was not his vassal; it must however be said that self-interest was clearly involved in maintaining his wife's more well-disposed relatives in power in this neighbouring principality. More significant, perhaps, is the reaction of the princes to King Henry I's call to arms in 1051–2 described by William of Poitiers.[50] Henry took contingents to Normandy sent from Burgundy, Auvergne and Gascony.

Admittedly, the counts of Blois and Anjou and the duke of Aquitaine found it intolerable that they should have to join the royal army wherever it was summoned, and refused to go on that occasion. But military service was becoming an important issue, and the obligation actually to perform it was more widely recognised by this date. The next step was the giving of service even when this was not in the interests of the prince. In 1101, Robert count of Flanders made an agreement with Henry I of England, his ally, that if Philip I, his lord, called on him to serve in England against Henry, he would do so. He would however supply only the minimum number of followers required to ensure that he did not forfeit his fief of Flanders from the French king.[51] During the twelfth century such obligations as this were widely recognised, and were ignored only by the most hostile of princes.

The formal swearing of homage by the princes to the king seems to have taken place more intermittently than the rendering of military service, which was not dependent on it. It is possible that homage was paid by the princes to the king at meetings even when the sources do not explicitly record it: for instance, when in 1060 the young Philip I met William the Conqueror at Dreux, and concluded a 'firm peace and serene friendship'.[52] The princes were at times described as the king's faithful men or vassals, which also implies homage may have been sworn. Odo II of Blois was given these labels but, as with his successors, this tie did not prevent him from taking to the field against the king with considerable frequency (pp. 43–46).

There is no evidence that Baldwin V of Flanders ever paid homage to Henry I or Philip I, even though he married the king's sister and was Philip I's guardian. His successors, Counts Robert I and Robert II, however, seem to have done so. The counts of Anjou were known as the king's *fideles* when they were in alliance with him, and this, though it may involve royal overlordship for small parcels of land rather than the whole county, may also reflect the swearing of homage. Before 1060, the Norman dukes went to the border to swear oaths to the French king on occasions, as in 1013–14; after 1060 it seems they refused to pay homage altogether until well into the twelfth century. This autonomous line stemmed partly from long traditions of Norman independence, and partly from the position of the dukes as kings of England, on the grounds that no king could do homage (pp. 62–63). But they did render service, and their reluctance to pay homage in the later eleventh century seems to show an awareness of its growing significance in France.

For this growth, indeed, they may have been in part responsible, since William the Conqueror emphasised the importance of ties based on commendation and landholding in both Normandy and England. This however does not seem to have affected the swearing of oaths by the other princes to the king until the second part of Philip I's reign. For much of the eleventh century the king and the princes thus used oath-swearing as a sign of alliance rather than a mark of subordination, and this serves to underline their equality in practical terms.

Royal defence

The king, like the territorial princes, was responsible for the defence of his principality, and for this purpose he was able to summon a force of vassals and footsoldiers from the *prévôtés* and towns. As king he was also responsible for the defence of the realm, and was owed service by the territorial princes. Throughout the eleventh century, he was involved in warfare with the princes very much on their level, however, and in such a context military service to the overlord could take on an ambiguous role. When the king and the count of Anjou were in league against the count of Blois, the military support of the Angevins would appear as much an act of alliance (like border homage) as of service. But the obligation was recognised, even if it was also at times resented; and in 1124, when there was a

genuine external threat to 'France' from the emperor, the response of the nobility to the call to arms was impressive (pp. 146–147).

Royal armies had in the Carolingian era consisted of heavy cavalry in conjunction with footsoldiers, and were based in part on levies raised from the *pagi* on the principle that all free men were liable for military service. In the changed political and military conditions of the tenth and eleventh centuries, these structures too changed. During the tenth century, warfare came to be focused ever more around the castle and the mounted knight, less around the foot soldier. The *miles* or knight came into his own as the core of the fighting force, and his status in society began to move from that of a retainer to that of a landed man.

Castles, both the strongholds under royal or princely control, and the private constructions of some castellans, all with political as well as military implications, proliferated during this period; their earlier layout, a palace or hall in a fairly spacious compound, was replaced with the compact motte and bailey, which was easier to defend as well as a more visible symbol of authority. During the eleventh century there were further developments in castle building – the wooden towers which surmounted the motte and baileys often being replaced by a stone tower or *donjon* – and armies probably increased in size. But the basic patterns of warfare appear to have remained the same.

There was still a place for the levy and the footsoldier in this system, albeit a rather reduced one. Trained footsoldiers, *servientes*, were often used as part of a fighting force; in 1016 in the battle between Odo II of Blois and Fulk Nerra of Anjou both knights and footsoldiers took part. There was a similar composition in William the Conqueror's army at Hastings in 1066. *Servientes* were also needed for castle guard and patrols. These footsoldiers seem to have been recruited by *prévôtés* and castellanies, and increasingly from the towns. In 988, when Hugh Capet was besieging Laon, the urban militia there fell on his knights during their siesta,[53] but particularly from the twelfth century the kings were also to use such troops from the towns, levied by households, to their own advantage. In Philip I's reign the inhabitants of the town of Corbie, led by the abbot, participated in several wars of the king in the Ile de France, strengthening the royal army.

The royal use of urban communal organisation in this way built on the earlier precedent provided by the peace associations, known as the peace of God, which had preceded the development of urban and rural communes, with the aim of maintaining themselves against local oppressors as power fragmented. Hence their interests often coincided with those of the Capetians; indeed, parochial and diocesan militia were used by the kings to assist in the enforcement of the peace and truce of God.

However, the core of the royal and noble armies in this period was the knight. These specialised heavy cavalrymen had originally been supported as retainers in the households of the powerful, but many knights came to hold benefices or fiefs in return for which they rendered service to their lords. Their status in society was thereby improving, in close association with the rising prominence of the code of

conduct known as chivalry. These knights owed their lord service, and he in turn owed service to his overlord, in the form of a contingent of knights to perform castle guard or to go on campaign. The *ost*, a full-scale military campaign, was clearly distinguished from the *chevauchée*, a brief expedition or escort duty.

The pyramid of service was in this period very hazy, but even when it was only partially effective, the king would benefit, for he was in theory owed service by his own knights, by the nobles of the Ile de France, and also by the other territorial princes, supposedly his vassals. Even though in practice many withdrew their fidelity, and many never swore loyalty to him at all, the princes of northern and central France rendered the king service on occasions, as their king and lord (p. 117).

In Normandy the quotas due for military service were fairly firmly fixed; in other areas of France they were more negotiable in the eleventh century, but the obligation was widely recognised. The system remained flexible, with many landless knights prepared to accept money payments for fighting, who were hence able to augment the 'feudal' contingents when these did not provide a sufficient fighting strength. Fulk Nerra of Anjou used paid knights in 991 and Odo II of Blois in 994–5, according to Richer, while William the Conqueror hired some stipendiary knights for the conquest of England. Indeed, with the subinfeudation of noble estates taking place only gradually, and in some areas in a very limited way, it is a mistake to draw too great a distinction between the landed knight and the paid knight, who were socially often on equal terms. Not until the twelfth century does a real gulf seem to have developed between the by then more numerous and established enfeoffed knights and the landless adventurers or mercenaries.

The rendering of military service was one aspect of a wide recognition of the king's overlordship, but he had another important military power which was public in origin: the right to control the castles of his own men. Although the later Carolingians and early Capetians accepted, indeed probably condoned, the widespread spontaneous fortification which was taking place, the notion survived that the king, duke or count had the right to license all these new castles. In practice of course this power had been divided out with other public powers. Its application varied from a formal assurance that the castellan would not use the castle in any way prejudicial to his lord's interests, to full 'rendability', where the lord could take possession of the castle for a certain length of time.[54] Rendability was widespread in the south of France in the eleventh century. Although it was not widely used in the north until the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries, William the Conqueror was able to exercise this right in his duchy, and even in the Ile de France, where it was far from being generally observed, its existence was not forgotten. It was often invoked for and linked with the protection of churches, another royal duty.

The royal power to license the building of castles was more widely acknowledged. Bouchard of Montmorency built himself a castle only with the permission of Robert the Pious, and the same king had managed to have destroyed the castle of Gallardon, built by Geoffrey, viscount of Châteaudun, which threatened the canons of Chartres. In 1092 Philip I granted the canons of Saint-Corneille at Compiègne the royal right to oppose the building of any fortifications around Compiègne.

In the eleventh century there were a considerable number of 'illegal' castles in the royal principality. These are a sign of royal weakness, but the existence of royal rights of licence and rendability were to help the king in his fight to dominate the independent nobles of the area in the twelfth century.

The kings and the church

Kings, bishops and Cluniacs, 987–1049

In the early ninth century the Frankish emperors had controlled all the bishoprics in their lands. They had chosen the bishops and kept a firm control over their activities and their lands. The church continued to play an important role in royal government, but as power fragmented, the west Frankish kings lost control over many outlying bishoprics to the territorial princes. However, they maintained their influence over several sees in northern France, including Reims, Laon, Châlons and Beauvais, where the bishops increasingly exercised comital as well as spiritual powers, giving them significant secular as well as ecclesiastical authority. This group of bishops played a crucial part in the transfer of power to the Capetians, and at their centre was Adalbero, the powerful archbishop of Reims.[55] He had wide spiritual authority in northern France, stretching into the empire, and also held the office of arch-chancellor of France which went with his office. He had important political connections as well, and a personal *kudos* from reforming his cathedral chapter and refounding the schools at Reims.

Furthermore, although the kings chose the archbishops of Reims, these in their turn also had the privilege of making the king, since all the later Carolingian kings had been crowned by Adalbero and his predecessors. The Robertians had had this service performed by the archbishops of Sens, so the willingness of Adalbero of Reims to crown Hugh Capet as king and his son Robert as his heir was of great significance. It symbolised the transfer of the loyalties of the northern French episcopate to the new ruling house, and although some, such as Adalbero's successor at Reims, Arnulf, and the bishop of Laon, Adalbero, did not prove faithful, Hugh gained enough ecclesiastical as well as lay support finally to defeat Charles of Lorraine.

Arnulf, bishop of Orléans, close counsellor of Hugh Capet, is a leading example of the royalist bishop. Intent on upholding the rights of the episcopate against the flourishing monastic houses, particularly those linked to Cluny, he was equally firm on the issue of papal interference with the French church, which he condemned. He was one of the leaders of the synod which overthrew Arnulf, archbishop of Reims, and replaced him with Gerbert of Aurillac, thereby incurring considerable papal displeasure. The bishop of Orléans was not alone however in standing behind the king, for with him were a substantial group of the French bishops, even in the face of spasmodic papal threats in the 990s. These threats were largely ineffective in practice, since the papacy was in a weak position politically and spiritually, and control of the office of pope was in dispute between the emperors and the counts of Tusculum.

Hugh Capet's influence over the northern French church was based as much on alliance as on the bowing of ecclesiastics to royal authority, but it was nevertheless effective. The Robertians had controlled many bishoprics in the provinces of Reims, Tours and Sens, and some of these they added to the débris of the Carolingian ecclesiastical rights in 987. Royal authority over the episcopate under the Capetians was however much diminished in comparison with the situation a century before. The deposition of Arnulf of Reims reaffirmed the Carolingian principle that a king could remove a disloyal prelate, but his right to nominate all the bishops in France had slipped away in the early tenth century.

Hugh's surviving charters suggest that a similar geographical shrinking had taken place in royal grants of protection to monasteries. Yet although a royal safeguard was not as widely valued as earlier, the king still acted as the patron for a number of important monasteries. Some, such as Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Saint-Denis, had been under Robertian control; others such as Fleury were inherited from the Carolingians (pp. 106–108).

However, a new and increasingly powerful force was represented by the abbey of Cluny and its affiliated houses in the tenth and early eleventh centuries (Source 3.2). Its monks followed a way of life based on the Carolingian interpretation of the sixth-century monastic rule known as the Rule of St Benedict, which had diminished the original emphasis on manual labour and had added considerably to the prescribed daily liturgical round. These 'reforms', and the support of Charlemagne and his son Louis the Pious, had helped to make the Benedictine rule the preeminent monastic custom in western Europe. Despite the disruptions of the ninth century, this style of monastic observance was to continue to flourish into the tenth and eleventh centuries.

SOURCE 3.2 THE ABBEY CHURCH OF CLUNY

The monastery of Cluny, founded in 910 by Duke William of Aquitaine, would go on to exercise a remarkable influence across Western Europe. The monastery's history can be read not only in its written sources, but also in its architecture. The modest first church at Cluny was built within an aristocratic complex, with the recently-discovered sarcophagus of Duke William's sister Eva at its heart. Little survives however of this first church, completed around 927, because within a few decades, the monastery had grown to such an extent that construction of a new church, Cluny II, was completed in 981.

Cluny's expansion continued apace, and so around 1088 Abbot Hugh of Cluny started rebuilding the church, constructing what would become known as Cluny III. Cluniac monasticism focussed on the ceremonial performance of the liturgy in the church, and by this time, the monastery had over 200 monks and was at the heart of a network of thousands more. So Cluny III was on a very grand scale, and lavishly decorated with sculpture. The construction of

what was for centuries the largest church in the Latin West – over six hundred feet long – took decades. It was also extremely expensive, and despite generous gifts from donors across the Latin West (including Spanish and English kings), it contributed to driving the great monastery into financial difficulties. Cluny's great church eventually fell victim to the French Revolution, leaving only the southern transept and its bell-tower above ground: these may still be visited.

IMAGE 3.5 Surviving tower and transept of the abbey of Cluny

Photo © E. Hallam

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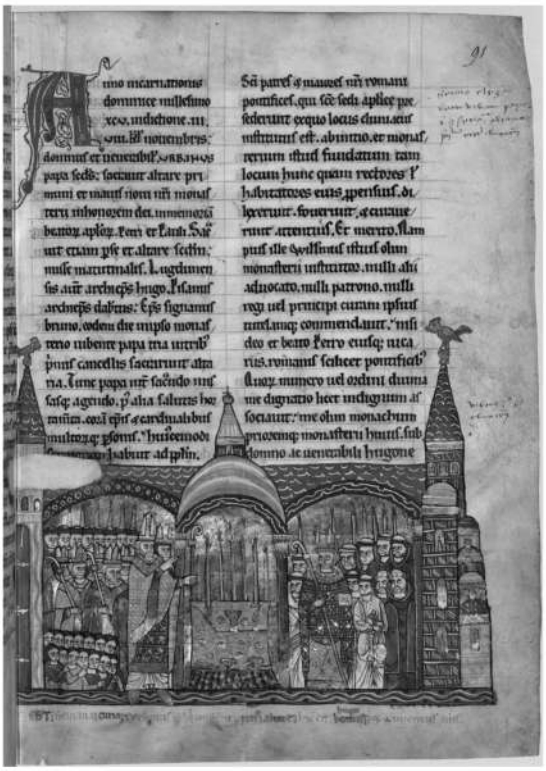

IMAGE 3.6 Consecration of the third abbey church of Cluny by Pope Urban II in 1095, twelfth-century illumination

BN MS Latin 17716, f. 91

Where the Cluniacs innovated most was in the nature of the freedoms that they claimed and their relation to external authorities, a position developed in the absence of adequate lay protection. The mother house was founded in 910 by Berno of Baume, in the duchy of Burgundy. It began as a small, struggling house, but its foundation charter, which was given by Duke William of Aquitaine, contained provisions which were to be a milestone in the relationship between monastic houses, the episcopate and the papacy. William declared that the monks were to be free to elect their own abbot on Berno's death:

> following the will of God and the rule promulgated by St Benedict – in such wise that neither by intervention of our own or of any power may they be impeded from making a purely canonical election. Every five years, moreover, the aforesaid monks shall pay to the church of the apostles ten shillings

> to supply them with lights; and they shall have the protection of those same apostles and the defence of the Roman pontiff. . . . And, through God and all his saints, and by the awful day of judgement, I warn and abjure that no one of the secular princes, no count, no bishop whatever, not the pontiff of the aforesaid Roman see, shall invade the property of these servants of God, or alienate it, or diminish it, or give it as a benefice to anyone.[56]

The new house, then, was to enjoy free abbatial elections, to be directly subject to and under the protection of the pope, and, William hoped, to be free from outside interference. It was in that quest for freedom from secular control that Cluny and the monasteries under her influence contrasted with Gorze and Brogne, monasteries at the centre of similar revivals, but under the patronage of the German king and the princes.[57]

Progress with building the abbey of Cluny was slow. A royal charter of confirmation was not obtained until 927 and a papal one not until 931; the second allowed monks from Cluniac houses to reform other monasteries where discipline had become slack. Such a privilege was rare and was greatly to increase Cluniac influence. Under Abbot Odo, Cluny's importance began to grow in France, and the great abbey of Fleury fell under its influence. In the time of Odo's successors, Aymard, Maiolus and Odilo – who played a leading part in the peace of God movement – Cluniac customs spread widely as Cluniac monks were called in to reform other monasteries in many parts of France. During the unusually long abbacy of Saint Hugh (1049–1109), an administrative system was evolved for the mother house and its dependents as they were gradually organised into a hierarchy, and arguably reached the apogee of their reputation and influence.

The Cluniac way of life had many attractions in a turbulent age. It was ordered, focussed to a large extent on an elaborate round of liturgical ceremony and prayer, spent in personal poverty but in the setting of finely decorated and ornamented cloisters and churches. The buildings of houses under Cluniac influence, as at Vézelay and Fleury (Image 3.7), give a vivid visual illustration of this magnificence. Much of the time of some monks had also to be devoted to the administration of the very considerable estates amassed by the major houses. These, and the spiritual force of the order, gave it a pre-eminent place, both in local societies and also in a wider political context.

The rise of Cluniac-style monasticism however also created tensions. The exemption from the authority of the episcopate which the developing network managed to consolidate during the tenth century led to many deep rifts between bishops and the Cluniac houses in their dioceses, symptomatic of a deeper rivalry. The abbots of Fleury and the bishops of Orléans were bitter adversaries in the eleventh century. Robert the Pious's natural brother, Gauzlin, abbot of Fleury from 1004, engaged in the conflict with the bishop, Fulk, with enthusiasm. In 1008 he refused obedience to Fulk, and when the bishop attempted to make a visitation of the house he was driven out. The king was subsequently ordered by Pope John XVIII to defend Fleury against Fulk, for, he said, the monastery had been placed under the custody of Saint Peter.

IMAGE 3.7 View of the abbey church at Fleury in the nineteenth century

From L. A. Marchand, *Souvenirs historiques sur l'ancienne abbaye de Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire* (Orleans, 1838), 121

Robert the Pious may not have required any such exhortation, for his interest in the Cluniacs was considerable. In his poem satirizing King Robert, Adalbero of Laon dwelt on the power that Abbot Odilo of Cluny exercised over this king. Although it gives a highly exaggerated picture, coloured by the rivalry of the secular clergy and the Cluniacs, it also reveals the extent to which some bishops, at least, identified the king with Cluny.

Certainly Robert was generous to many houses under Cluniac influence, including Saint-Denis and to some limited extent Saint-Germain-des-Prés (although compare pp. 107–108) – both royal houses influenced by the Cluniacs – as well as Marmoutier and Fleury. Abbot Odilo and his fellow monks found considerable favour with Robert, and despite a rupture after 1005 when Robert, invading Burgundy, burned the monastery of Saint-Germain at Auxerre, Odilo appears subsequently to have forgiven him. In 1016 the king was in Rome when Pope Benedict VIII fulminated against the depredators of Cluny's lands and goods; indeed this papal bull may have been drawn up at his request. In 1027 Odilo assisted at the crowning of the future Henry I.

However, other monasteries besides those associated with Cluny found favour with Robert the Pious. Robert made no real attempt to gather together dispersed lands of royal abbeys such as Saint-Germain-des-Prés. But his charters indicate that he gave substantially to the abbey of Saint-Aignan at Orléans (although here he held the lay abbacy himself) and to the colleges of secular

canons at Étampes, Melun and Poissy, to which he granted important lands and rights. Abbeys such as Saint-Serge at Angers and Fécamp in Normandy also benefited from his generosity.

Robert also confirmed foundations such as the small college of secular canons at Coulombs in the Beauce, built on the former estate of Saint-Germain-des-Prés at Villemeux which had been lost a century before; this grant was made at the end of his reign, at the same time as a noticeable shift in the witnesses of royal charters from abbots of great monasteries to the heads of small collegiate churches was taking place. In addition, the greater collegiate churches under royal patronage, independent of both Cluny and of the episcopate, such as Sainte-Geneviève at Paris, also had an important role in the ecclesiastical domain of the early Capetians. They provided at once an enclave of royal authority and clerics to staff the royal court.[58]

Despite Robert's support for the monastic way of life, the episcopate still had an important part to play in royal affairs. The letters of Fulbert of Chartres (Source 3.3) contain many insights into the relationship of the crown and the bishops. One element which Fulbert is at pains to stress is the sacred nature of the office of king. In 1015 he supported Robert's actions against the suspected heretic count of Sens:

> May you know, brothers, that king [Robert] acts rightly when he aids Christians and harms heretics; and all his vassals (*fideles*), myself included, should strengthen and aid him in doing this, for it is his office, and through it he must work out his salvation.[59]

He is willing to give the king support in his choice of Franco for the bishopric of Paris: 'if the clerk is well educated and can speak with ease', then he will be a suitable choice.[60]

SOURCE 3.3 THE LETTERS OF FULBERT OF CHARTRES

Theologian and ecclesiastical reformer Bishop Fulbert of Chartres, who died in 1028, was also a prolific letter writer, who corresponded with contacts across the kingdom of France and sometimes beyond, including counts, kings, bishops and abbots. His letters reveal the wide range of themes that an early eleventh-century bishop had to deal with: priests unsure of how many people needed to be present for mass to be celebrated, archbishops wondering about how to discipline corrupt or ignorant clergy, counts reluctant to punish their followers for violent crimes, friends seeking medical advice, wives seeking divorce on favourable terms, and a trickster who had stolen a horse without paying.

Most of Fulbert's letters survive in manuscripts connected to his church at Chartres, but two of his letters were copied more widely. One, a letter to Duke William of Aquitaine discussing what a vassal owed to his lord and a

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lord to his vassal, has often been cited in discussion of feudalism as an unusually explicit discussion of what loyalty actually entailed. In another noted letter Fulbert responded to an anxious enquiry by King Robert the Pious asking what the import might be of rain the colour of blood falling in Aquitaine. Fulbert's answer, drawing on a number of historical precedents, was impeccably learned, though the king cannot have been reassured to learn that such rain signified imminent public disaster.

In another major contribution to the church and his diocese, Fulbert organised the rebuilding of his cathedral at Chartres after a fire in 1020. Although the work was not completed until well after his death in 1028, he is depicted in this eleventh-century illuminated manuscript standing inside it. His great church was again to be reconstructed, finally, in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries as a masterpiece of Gothic art, but Fulbert's memory was long revered in his city and some of his work, most notably his crypt, was retained.

IMAGE 3.8 Depiction of Fulbert of Chartres in his newly-built cathedral, from an eleventh-century martyrology

Image © Médiathèque l'Apostrophe de Chartres (formerly Bibliothèque de Chartres), NA 4, f.34

But Fulbert's letters also show something of the profoundly disturbed state of much of northern French society at the time. In 1021–2 he wrote to the king:

> I am still keeping most of those who live in the area of Chartres from breaking out and injuring you, but as for Herbert and Geoffrey, enjoin them as I will, I have not been able to restrain them. Some of your servants who have

> been injured by these evil-doers . . . are venting their wrath against the land of our most holy Lady, plundering our crops and other possessions in the neighbourhood . . . To these troubles is added the burning of our church.[61]

Small wonder, perhaps, that Robert the Pious was an enthusiastic supporter of the peace of God, and had plans to give it a wider footing than merely within his own lands, where it emerged in about 1020. In 1023, while negotiating with the Emperor Henry II, he discussed with him the possibility of adopting it throughout both their kingdoms.

In Henry I's reign the role of the episcopate seems somewhat to have dwindled, as the royal entourage was increasingly composed of lesser nobles and lesser ecclesiastics from the Capetian principality. The papal reform movement, from the mid-eleventh century, may have been a factor in this, by promoting the independence of the episcopate from lay influence. The Cluniacs under the abbacies of Odilo and Hugh were now reaching the apogee of their power and prestige. Henry was not, however, the enthusiastic patron of Cluny that his father had been. He preferred to favour the Carolingian style of abbey, powerful locally but independent from other religious houses. In 1048 he brought Saint-Médard at Soissons directly under royal protection, and on this occasion an unusually large group of bishops and nobles witnessed the charter effecting this act. Henry also, as Robert had done, confirmed a considerable number of small noble monastic foundations.

Monarchy and papal reform, 1049–1108

The late 1040s marked the beginning of the papal reform programme, a new era in the history of the western church, which was greatly to modify the relations between rulers and various elements in the church, especially the papacy, the episcopate and the monastic orders. Mazel has argued that this reform programme was a rupture that was much more far-reaching than any mere dynastic change: it was nothing short of a 'cultural revolution', bringing with it a host of new ideas and assumptions that would go on to shape medieval French society.[62]

For the previous century the papal office had been the object of faction fights between Roman families, with periodic imperial intervention complicating matters further. Respect in western Christendom for Rome itself, the see of Saint Peter and an important centre of pilgrimage, had remained in general undiminished, even though the moral authority of its pontiff was greatly eroded. Some popes, such as the imperial nominee Sylvester II (formerly Gerbert of Aurillac), had clearly been worthy of their office, but others had manifested a striking degree of turpitude.

A tide of dissatisfaction with the church was growing, but needed direction; and this was provided by Emperor Henry III. In 1046 he came to Rome for his coronation. As a man strongly interested in church reform, when he found three rival candidates vying for the papal office, he dismissed them all and installed as pope his own nominee, the German bishop of Bamberg, Suidger, who became Pope Clement II. This pope, and the next, Damasus II, both died suspiciously

quickly, but Henry's third candidate, Bruno bishop of Toul, who was a relative of the emperor and who became Pope Leo IX, survived and began to implement a sweeping reform programme. He appointed reforming clergy from France and Germany as well as from Italy as cardinals, and he gave them effective power. This group included Humbert of Silva Candida and Hildebrand, who was later to become Pope Gregory VII.

Leo travelled through Europe holding local synods to combat evil in the church – an entirely new style of papal government. In 1049 he held a council at Reims in France. Anselm, a monk of Reims who attended it, wrote down a list of its canons. Amongst these it was decreed that:

> no one should be advanced to the rule of a church without election by clergy and people . . . that no one should buy or sell sacred orders, or ecclesiastical office or churches . . . that no one should injure poor men by thefts or frauds.[63]

Leo condemned such abuses as simony, the nomination of bishops by lay lords, the levying of military service on ecclesiastical lands, and probably clerical marriage. Certain abbots and bishops were named as guilty of particularly scandalous conduct and were excommunicated and deposed. Although his rule ended unfortunately in 1053 when he was defeated in battle and captured by the Normans in southern Italy, his pontificate harnessed currents of reform that led to a major reappraisal of the western church, with major implications both for kings and their subjects.

Under Leo's successor, Victor II, the attempt to wipe out ecclesiastical abuses continued. In 1056 Hildebrand acted as papal legate in France and had six bishops removed from their sees. As the political aspects of papal reform, which appeared as an attempt to centralise the church under papal leadership, emerged more clearly, so too did a growing body of opposition in France. This was not only ecclesiastical resistance, for William duke of Normandy and Geoffrey Martel count of Anjou, lay rulers, both refused to obey certain papal commands.

Henry I of France, accused of simony (the buying and selling of ecclesiastical offices) and of tyranny by Cardinal Humbert in 1058, continued to sell off bishoprics and abbacies and ignored papal fulminations altogether. At the same time, he also continued to favour certain religious houses. Most important were the canons whose houses were small and under episcopal and seigneurial control rather than directly subject to the pope, as were the Cluniac-influenced abbeys. There was, probably then, a political element in his monastic patronage. He gave a number of houses of canons charters of confirmation and protection, and made donations to a few.

In about 1060, well after the papal reform programme had been proclaimed in France and many Benedictine houses even in the Ile de France had been drawn into papal circles, Henry refounded the ancient abbey of Saint-Martin-des-Champs, deserted since the Norman invasions. He endowed it generously and, while keeping it firmly under royal control, gave it valuable privileges. Significantly it was established for canons regular and not for monks. Its customs were also extended to other royal houses of canons, including Saint-Vincent at Senlis, founded by

Henry's wife Anne after his death and in his memory. The royal house thus became an important patron of this growing religious order.

The origins of canons stretch back to the early church. By the Carolingian period they had emerged as clerks living in a community such as that of Bishop Chrodegang of Metz. They followed a rule, but unlike monks they could hold private property. Often the estates of a house of canons, a college, were divided into prebends for its incumbents. In 816 at the council of Aachen, a rule based on patristic writings and on the customs of Metz was drawn up for them. Colleges of canons were founded as an alternative to monasteries, and this was the organisation adopted by most French and by many English cathedral chapters.

In the eleventh century the reformed canons emerged. They took on the monastic style of organisation, adopting personal poverty and holding their property in common. They were known as regular or Augustinian canons in that they followed the Rule of Saint Augustine, a short set of precepts drawn up by Saint Augustine of Hippo in the early fifth century, to which many customs were added. This differentiated them from monks in the eleventh century, who still followed the rule of Saint Benedict; so too did their greater emphasis on pastoral work. In the twelfth century, further reformed orders of canons regular, such as the Premonstratensians, were founded. These were in practice virtually indistinguishable from the reformed orders of monks such as the Cistercians in their way of life (pp. 181–182), and achieved considerable popularity with founders and recruits.

In the eleventh century, though, before the proliferation of the new orders, the distinction between monks and canons, whether secular or regular, was clearer. In France some of the first reformed houses of canons were Saint-Barthelémy at Beauvais, refounded in 1037, and Saint-Martin at Laon, refounded before 1049. These probably provided the models for Henry I's house of Saint-Martin-des-Champs.

During Philip I's reign as king of France, the western church saw two striking developments. One was the first crusade, the earliest of the holy wars conducted on the grand scale by the western nobility in Palestine (building on precedents in Spain from the 1060s), with the aim of regaining and protecting the holy places from their Muslim captors. Conducted with papal backing, they embodied the piety, pugnacity, violence and greed of the western nobles, and earned much prestige for their lay and ecclesiastical leaders.

The First Crusade followed an appeal from Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont in 1095, and was popularised by the inspired preaching of the papal legate, Bishop Adémar of Le Puy, as well as by independent preachers such as Peter the Hermit. A considerable force from the west, consisting mainly of men from the various regions and states of France – but not the king, who was at the time excommunicated for his marital transgressions – embarked in 1096 for the Holy Land via Constantinople.

By 1099, despite the deep dissensions between their leaders – the Norman Bohémond (a Hauteville from Sicily), Godfrey of Bouillon, Hugh of Vermandois, Raymond IV count of Toulouse, Robert Curthose duke of Normandy and Robert II count of Flanders – they had succeeded in capturing Antioch and

Jerusalem, having routed their Seljuk and Fatimid adversaries; and they then established four Latin states in Outremer. This was an extraordinary achievement, which the papacy sought to claim as its own and from which it did not fail to profit. So too however did the families who took part, and later French kings were keen to ensure that they did not miss the opportunities for gaining prestige and the moral leadership that crusading offered (pp. 201–202).

The second dramatic development in ecclesiastical politics in the later eleventh century was the emergence of a deep chasm of hostility dividing the papacy and the emperors. The substance of their dispute later became centred on the technicalities of the lay investiture of bishops, whereby the new bishop was granted his office and powers by the emperor, king or count, and was invested with his ring and staff, symbolic of his office. The rights of the lay potentate to do this were disputed by the reforming clergy. But the dispute also involved far wider issues which had begun to emerge under Leo IX, when attempts to introduce disciplinary reforms had been accompanied with a build-up in papal power.

Under Pope Gregory VII, formerly Cardinal Hildebrand, the political claims of the pope to rule the whole church, and even to have the power to depose the emperor, giving his authority a secular dimension, were clearly seen in action. With lay investiture becoming the specific point at issue, Gregory VII and his successors were involved in bitter conflict with Emperor Henry IV of Germany, and this dispute was not to be settled until 1122. Even then the basic problem of the rival claims of both pope and emperor to dominate western society was left unresolved.

The revitalised and aggressive church took a generally unfriendly view of Philip I, whose marital scandals and self-indulgent way of life alone would have made him a target of attack. He was excommunicated in 1095 as a result of his marriage to Bertrada of Montfort, but the impact of the papal anathemas was reduced to a great extent by the support for the king from a group of French bishops: some of them, such as Walter of Meaux and John of Orléans, were his appointees, but all of them were anxious about the encroachment of papal authority in the French church. The noted canonist Ivo of Chartres, whom the king imprisoned on this matter in 1093 (p. 96), later played an important conciliatory role in the disputes of the king and the papacy. But this reformer also found much to criticise in Philip's attitude towards the church in France. The French king appears to have shared the conviction of his contemporary, William Rufus of England, that this organisation was there to be exploited.

Contemporary writers, all ecclesiastics, made much of his behaviour, and they may well exaggerate considerably; but their accounts indicate that Philip I took a hard line against the church's attempts to diminish his control over it. He exercised his regalian rights to the full, sold offices when he could; and a number of sources suggest that he was capable of considerable depredations. In 1092–3 he did substantial damage to the estates of the bishopric of Chartres on the grounds that Ivo disapproved of his liaison with Bertrada.

Early in his reign he is said to have fallen out with Guy bishop of Beauvais, whom he sent into exile for a year. In Guy's absence his church lands and goods

were pillaged and the church plate sold. Renaud bishop of Langres was imprisoned by the king at Noyon, while in 1082 Philip removed Raoul, archbishop of Tours, from office. In 1080 when Manasses, archbishop of Reims, had been deposed, Gregory VII wrote to the king requesting that the community be allowed to hold a free election – perhaps a measure of Philip's power.

But opposition may well have hardened his attitude. In 1100 only a minority of the Beauvais chapter elected Stephen of Garlande, the king's chancellor, but Philip nevertheless supported his candidature and vowed that he would never let his rival, Galon, take his place. So novel did this seem to Ivo of Chartres that he wrote to Pope Paschal II denouncing it as sacrilege. A letter from Philip to Anselm, the exiled archbishop of Canterbury, written 1103–5, in which he offers him help because he has suffered unjustly at the hands of Henry I of England, reads somewhat ironically in this context.[64]

Philip was involved in a number of direct clashes with the papacy, not only over his personal life and his uncompromising attitude to ecclesiastical reform but also, as with the emperor, over the specific issues of lay investiture and, above all, simony. From 1075 Gregory began to involve himself in French episcopal elections, particularly disputed or simoniacal ones as at Chartres and Orléans in 1077. In the next few years the papal legate Hugh of Die managed to effect the deposition of Manasses archbishop of Reims in the teeth of opposition from the king. The pope also suppressed the title of the archbishop of Sens as primate of Gaul, giving this instead to the archbishop of Lyon, a city in the empire (1079), much to Philip's anger. But Gregory VII was not nearly as intransigent with Philip I as with Henry IV of Germany; at times he made political overtures to the French king – which Philip resolutely ignored.

With Pope Urban II, Philip was at first on good terms. In about 1095 the sees of Arras and Cambrai were separated by their mutual agreement. But at the end of this pontificate the pope and Philip fell out over the issues of Philip's marriage and over the legitimacy of the elections of Daimbert archbishop of Sens, whom Philip had invested, and of Sancho bishop of Orléans. The rift was not deep, since the king wanted his marriage to be accepted by the whole church and so allowed some free elections to take place. Under the moderating influence of Ivo of Chartres, the king, the pope and the French bishops gradually arrived at a consensus: the king should not invest bishops with the ring and staff, symbols of their spiritual office, but they owed the temporalities of their sees to the king and should pay homage for them.

Elections still remained a problem, and Pope Paschal II quarrelled with the king over the election to Beauvais and again over his divorce. Yet after 1104 their relations improved considerably. This was probably the result of papal initiative, but the king too was now more ready to compromise. In 1107 Philip, his son Louis and the pope proclaimed at the council of Troyes their agreement over the investiture dispute, and promulgated further disciplinary reforms of the church in France. This rapport was a new development but a fruitful one – and significant for the future: the French king and the popes were to remain on generally good terms for almost two centuries.

If Philip tried to be a firm master of the French church and was often an unjust one, he showed some interest in a number of monasteries and made some moderately generous grants to them. In 1094 he placed Saint-Magloire in Paris under Cluniac tutelage for the purpose of reform, and when in 1106 he granted the college of Saint-Martin-les-Vieilles at Étampes-les-Vieilles to Morigny, he regulated the organisation of the prebends at Saint-Martin and spelt out the nature of its connections with Morigny.

The Cluniacs found considerable favour with him. To Cluny itself he granted lands, and in 1079 he refounded Saint-Martin-des-Champs for monks and granted it to Cluny as a priory, reversing the decision of his father. To Fleury he was not outstandingly generous, although he did grant it a church at Étampes and gave some help towards the building work. However, it was here that he chose to be buried rather than in Saint-Denis with the rest of his family, for, according to Abbot Suger, he recognised that he had been less generous to St-Denis than had his predecessors, and was also concerned that there his tomb would be lost among those of so many noble kings (Source 3.4).[65]

SOURCE 3.4 KING PHILIP I'S TOMB AT FLEURY (SAINT-BENOIT-SUR-LOIRE), THIRTEENTH CENTURY

On a winter's day in 1958, an excavation at Fleury, a monastery in the Loire valley, opened up an extraordinary tomb: that of King Philip I of France (d. 1108), the only French royal tomb to have escaped desecration in the French Revolution. Inside were the king's remains, showing him to have been around six foot, decidedly tall for the period. The king's hair and bones were still visible, as too were the remains of a mass of vegetation that had been buried with him, including mint and walnut leaves, thought to have preservatory properties. Also present were textiles, notably a red woollen cloak and exotic patterned silk, which would have been imported from Byzantium. The excavators reported a strong scent, which they identified with incense or some kind of perfume.

The tomb effigy (*gisant*), which was later set above Philip's resting-place in the centre of the crossing of the church, had suffered much wear and tear and had needed heavy restoration in the nineteenth century. Yet these discoveries within his tomb remind us of dimensions of the medieval past that are too easily forgotten. Those who could afford it would have been richly and brightly dressed, as indeed manuscript images and a few rare textile survivals remind us; they would have used scents and perfumes too, something that images cannot show. The tomb reminds us too of the physicality of these kings, whose touch was, from the eleventh century, considered by contemporaries to have curative properties – though ironically the excavators reported that Philip's bones crumbled into dust when they were touched.[66]

IMAGE 3.9 Philip I's tomb at Fleury (Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire)

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This story, if true, gives an interesting insight into Philip's attitude to religious affairs. On the one hand, he was prepared to stand up for what he saw as his rights to exploit the lands and offices of the church. On the other hand, perhaps he feared God's wrath enough to prepare with care for the salvation of his soul, not with his forbears in the royal pantheon, but on his own in a religious house where personalised intercession could be provided for him.

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4

THE REVIVAL OF ROYAL POWER, 1108–1226

Introduction

The Capetian revival: an inevitable development?

In retrospect, the years 1106–1226, and especially 1200–1214, marked a key turning-point in French history, a time during which the crown, at first enfeebled, achieved a commanding presence within the kingdom.[1] In 1108 the new French king, Louis VI, was little more powerful than his predecessors. Master only of a small and ill-disciplined principality centred on Paris and Orléans, he could claim royal powers over the church and over the princes and other great nobles of France that, whilst in theory could not be denied, in practice were often ignored. But in 1226 when Louis VIII, his great-grandson, died, the royal lands included a now well-disciplined and well-administered royal principality, together with the duchy of Normandy, the counties of Maine and Anjou and most of Poitou, and substantial holdings, even if not outright domination, in the Languedoc. The king's legal overlordship was acknowledged and generally obeyed, and his grip over the French church was considerable.

Certainly this power lacked deep foundations, and was to be challenged in the minority of Louis IX; but by the end of his reign (1270) it would be firmly consolidated. The achievements of Philip Augustus and Louis VIII were remarkable, and because they gained so much power it is easy to imagine that this was bound to be the outcome, and that the early Capetians were not as weak as they may appear.

In truth, these early Capetians had exercised only a limited authority over their kingdom. But recent accounts (pp. 81–83) stress that despite their political weakness, their office was still set apart through the respect in which it was held and the powers, albeit often latent, attached to it. Royal authority played out through their sacral office of kingship, their capability increasingly to exploit the wealth of

their domains, their authority over and alliance with the church and their compact with the great regional princes, ensuring mutual recognition of rights and powers. Such advantages provided the foundations, the seed-bed, that enabled the growth of royal power in the twelfth century.

Social and economic changes undoubtedly supported the increase in their powers. A complex and long-term process, these changes included population growth, land clearance, the spread of markets, fairs and commerce, an increasing prosperity and an economy more dependent on coinage than had been the case a century earlier. All these favoured the king's income and powers.

The royal principality was brought more closely under control later than Normandy but earlier than most of the other principalities – and the resources of the royal domain could now be fully exploited. Under Louis VII these were still not sufficient to allow the king to wage warfare on the grand scale, but by finding new sources of revenue, Philip Augustus was able to fight the wealthy Plantagenet kings of England, Henry II, Richard I and John, whose power extended over more than half his kingdom.

In 1199 Philip Augustus had a relatively well-organised and quite thoroughly taxed principality as a power base. In addition, the overlordship and sacral powers that went with his royal office were beginning to have some considerable practical meaning. The royal court exercised increased competence, the princes were becoming more habitually his vassals, acknowledging his suzerainty. But Richard I of England still held all his French lands in an iron grip and was making gains at Philip's expense.

When Richard died, Philip was able to use all the weapons in his arsenal, both new and old, against Richard's brother and successor King John of England. He could not have proceeded without them, without the build-up in his acknowledged role in France, but against Richard they had only enough impact to keep their power in balance. John however squandered the rights, resources and political capital of his predecessors, alienated many key supporters and was frequently outwitted by Philip and his allies on the battlefield.

For Philip, seizing Normandy, greater Anjou, Poitou and Brittany was a matter of a well-fought campaign backed up by allies; their resources and manpower could then be deployed by the French king. Although Poitou was lost for a while and Brittany granted away, Philip was able to retain Normandy and greater Anjou through forming alliances with key interests and by exercising the powers already built up there by the Norman dukes and Angevin counts. The rebellions during the minority of Louis IX showed that royal power was still far from being deeply entrenched throughout the kingdom; nevertheless, Louis IX was able to consolidate what his father and grandfather had taken by force. Much could have been lost at this point, as much had been gained by Philip and Louis VIII.

Looked at from this perspective the rise of the Capetians looks far from inevitable, but rather appears as being made possible by a number of developments. Fortune played a leading part, notably in helping the Capetians avoid the succession

crises which periodically weakened their neighbours to both west and east. But these opportunities were relevant only because the king was able to turn them to good account. The significance of Philip Augustus's reign was very great; in the dramatic decade 1194–1204 Philip first lost his early gains to Richard, but then took them back from John and finally went on to seize the heartlands of John's French possessions.

These events reveal the key importance of the characters and abilities of the chief protagonists in the struggle, the outcome of which was vitally important in the shift of power towards the Capetians. Richard was a match for Philip, but Philip was a more effective military leader and politician than John. Philip Augustus was a king of great ability who profited from events, rather than an actor playing a role sketched out for him by a providence that decreed the Capetians must rise (Figure 4.1).

The kings and their reigns

Louis VI, 1108–37: the king and the castellans

Louis VI's biographer, Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis, wrote that the king never relinquished the good habits formed in his youth, that he defended churches, protected the needy and the poor and worked ceaselessly for peace and for the defence of his realm. The original title of this panegyric was *The Life of Louis VI the Glorious* ('*gloriosus*').[2] Suger's portrayal of Louis is an idealised one, written to emphasise his view of monarchy and to glorify his abbey, whose patron saint he was keen to promote as the special protector, even the spiritual overlord, of the king and kingdom (pp. 197–203).

Louis VI was in some ways unpromising material for such a role. Except perhaps by contrast with Philip I his 'saintly' qualities were few, and his interests were directed more towards the battlefield than the cloister. Although vigorous and active in his youth he later suffered poor health and became increasingly obese. By the time he was 46 years old he was famously no longer able to get on a horse: reflecting this, Suger's work had by the end of the twelfth century been retitled *The Life of Louis VI the Fat* ('*grossus*').

Although his marriage to Lucienne of Rochefort, from a crusading castellan family, was dissolved by the pope in 1107 as not fitting to the royal dignity, Louis did not marry again until 1115. But Adela of Maurienne, his second wife, brought him eight sons and a daughter, in addition to the nine illegitimate children produced by his many liaisons. Adela was a powerful, effective and competent queen who played a formal partnership role in government (p. 206).[3] Their apparently promising eldest son Philip was born in 1116 and was crowned in 1129, but died in 1131 after ignominiously falling from his horse which had tripped over a domestic pig.[4] Their second son, the future Louis VII, previously marked out for a clerical career, now became heir to the throne.

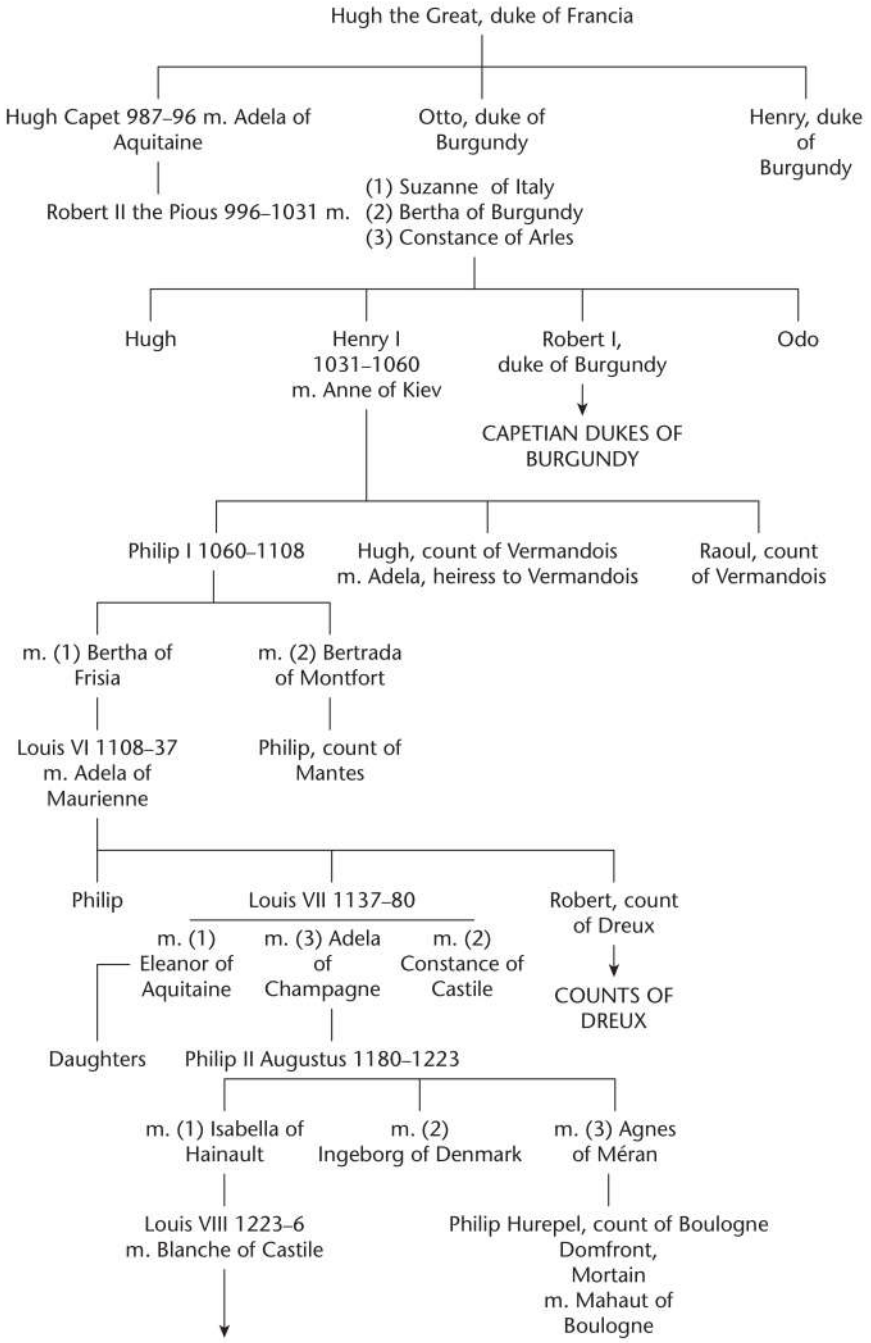


FIGURE 4.1 Outline genealogy of the Capetian kings, 987–1226

Guibert of Nogent accuses Louis VI of a sordid cupidity, and this appears to be substantiated to some extent by the king's money-raising methods. He left his jewels and regalia in pawn for a period of over ten years. But for contemporaries he also seems to have had many positive qualities. Both Suger and Ivo of Chartres portray him as a man of a simple, open nature, rarely perfidious, often kindly. And whilst quarrelling with the church on a number of occasions, he was also a generous patron of monks (pp. 233–234). Although some historians play down his effectiveness, a major study by Bournazel sees this reign as highly significant in rebuilding royal power.[5] This vigorous warrior deployed his rights as overlord over the princes, tamed the royal principality by dint of constant warfare against the castellans, developed the royal administration and, with the support of the church, set the monarchy on a firmer footing.

In the first part of his reign Louis was dominated by Stephen of Garlande, archdeacon of Notre-Dame at Paris, from 1120 both royal seneschal and chancellor, and a noted pluralist, and his family. But Stephen's loyalty could waver, and in 1127 Louis, who had supported him against the enmity of the queen and numerous French churchmen, found him too overbearing and had him removed from office. Stephen rebelled, and in 1132 he was reinstated as chancellor. He had lost some of his influence, although the king was prepared to shield him from papal wrath after the murder of two reforming ecclesiastics – Archambaud, sub-dean of Sainte-Croix at Orléans, who was killed by the retainers of Stephen's clerk John, and Thomas, prior of Saint-Victor at Paris, who fell at the hand of Stephen's vassals. These events, which took place in 1133, brought the king into bad odour with Pope Innocent II.

From 1127 onwards, the king's principal adviser was Suger, abbot of Saint-Denis, a younger son from a family of minor knights who made his career in the church and the king's service. Later in Louis VI's reign Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, who was largely responsible for the great popularity and influence of the Cistercian order, became involved in the politics of Louis's court as well. Severe and ascetic, he was more ready than Suger to criticise the role of the king in the French church, and their views on the decoration of ecclesiastical buildings, and by extension the role and function of the church, also differed markedly. Suger, however, was arguably to achieve far more than Bernard for Louis VI and for Louis VII, by acting as a counsellor and an administrator and by promoting the royal dignity as an adjunct to that of his abbey's patron saint, Denis (pp. 197–203). Although qualified in a royal charter as a close and faithful counsellor to the king, the abbot had no official title in royal government; yet he played a major part in the politics of the last decade of Louis VI's reign and reappeared as the leading counsellor of his son from 1143 until his death in 1151.[6]

The king's principal preoccupation for most of his reign was the domination of the castellan families of the Île-de-France, some of whom had gained considerable status from their crusading exploits.[7] Their powers in the areas they controlled were often substantial and some appear to have behaved with considerable savagery,

although the accounts of ecclesiastics such as Guibert of Nogent are obviously coloured by their outlook. Guibert says of Thomas of Marle:

> His cruelty was unheard of in our day – some who are also thought cruel were gentler in slaughtering cattle than he in slaughtering men. For he did not simply put to the sword those convicted of a crime, as is supposed to happen, but he completely butchered them with horrific torture . . . No one could say how many perished from starvation, disease or torture while chained in his prison.[8]

This bears all the hallmarks of exaggeration, but Thomas of Marle, later to be reinvented as a model of crusading valour, does seem to have displayed considerable anarchical and bellicose tendencies that made him a threat to the stability of the Laon area. He engaged in constant warfare with his father Enguerrand of Coucy; and he cut the throat of a relative, Walter, archdeacon of Laon.

When in 1112 the townsfolk of Laon murdered their bishop, he gave protection to the ringleaders. He also occupied two properties of the abbey of Saint-Jean of Laon. In 1114 Thomas was excommunicated by a council held by the papal legate Conan of Palestrina and declared unfit to bear arms. The king with the backing of the church waged war against him.

Thomas's castles at Crécy and Nouvion fell to Louis, heading an army of men levied by the church parish by parish. The king razed these fortresses and Thomas, surrounded at Marle, was forced to submit and offer indemnity to both king and church. But Louis, whose chivalrous instincts often overrode his common sense, pardoned him, and, now made more powerful by inheriting the castles of Coucy and Boves, he seems to have returned to his hostile ways. At last in 1130 Ralph, count of Vermandois, Thomas's personal enemy and the king's cousin and close adviser, joined with a group of bishops and persuaded Louis VI to organise another punitive expedition. At Coucy Thomas was wounded, and he fled to Laon, where he was captured. Eventually he died in captivity.

A similar threat to law and order in the Beauce and around Chartres was posed by Hugh of Le Puiset, from another crusading dynasty. Suger describes him as a man who devoured church lands and mocked excommunications.[9] In 1111 the king was holding court at Melun when Theobald, count of Blois, the archbishop of Sens, the bishops of Chartres and Orléans and various abbots laid such strong charges against him that the king ordered him to appear before the royal court. Hugh refused to do so, and the king declared his lands forfeit, besieged and took Le Puiset and captured Hugh. But, again mistakenly, he released him in 1112 and Hugh, like Thomas of Marle, again began to terrorise his neighbourhood. For some time he was supported by the count of Blois, but in 1118 Louis managed to defeat him once more. In the fighting Hugh killed Anseau of Garlande, the royal seneschal, but soon after this he died himself while on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

These two struggles of Louis against unruly castellans have become celebrated, but they were paralleled with many others that are not so fully described

by the chroniclers. Before his accession the king had waged war on the lords of Montmorency and Beaumont and Ebles of Roucy. In 1109 he reduced Péronne and granted it to the house of Vermandois, and in 1117 took the county of Amiens from local castellans and granted it to Enguerrand of Coucy. But not until 1130 when Thomas of Marle fell were the lands north of Paris relatively secure. To the south of Paris, the powerful castellans who often aligned themselves with the counts of Blois and the dukes of Normandy against the king, such as Peter of Maule and Guy the Red and his son Hugh of Crecy, had many of their castles destroyed and confiscated by the king. The removal of the Montlhéry family made the Paris area safer, that of the Puisets secured the Beauce. The defeat of other castellans such as Humbert of Saint-Sevère in 1107 opened up the way to the Loire.

Although Louis's work was not completed in 1137, the Capetian lands were safer and the capacity of the crown to make use of its own resources was augmented. Furthermore, by summoning vassals to his court and then, if they did not appear, mounting campaigns against them, and often confiscating their lands, Louis emphasised his power as overlord and tightened the ties of vassalage. Greater security, increased royal power and confiscated resources were all of vital importance; so too were the new royal castles that Louis constructed at important strategic points. A chronicler lists these as Montchauvet, Lorrez-le-Bocage, Grez, Corbeil and La Ferté-Alais.[10]

Louis VI, 1108–37: the king in the kingdom

By widening his interventions inside other principalities Louis VI gave his office of king a stronger emphasis. This change stemmed from his activities in the Île-de-France, where he showed himself both an effective soldier and a chivalrous adversary, protecting church lands and crushing the castellans. Hence nobles and ecclesiastics from further afield appealed to him for help, and the more he intervened effectively to help them the greater his prestige became, and the more others would be likely to turn to him. His often aggressive expeditions to regions previously outside the royal influence are clear signs of a slowly widening royal power in the kingdom.

In 1108–9, for example, Louis made an expedition into the Bourbonnais, in Berry. Aimon II Vaire-Vache had seized the lordship of Bourbon on the death of his brother Archambaud, a royal vassal. The lawful heir was Archambaud's son, and the new husband of Archambaud's widow appealed on his behalf to the royal court. The king called Aimon to his court and, when he failed to appear, took an army to Berry and besieged his castle at Germigny. Aimon submitted and the lands went to the rightful heir: Suger commented that kings had long arms.

In 1122 a similar incident occurred. Aimery, bishop of Clermont, was cast out of his see by William VI, count of Auvergne, and appealed to Louis for help. William was summoned to appear before the king and when he failed to do so Louis called together an army, including the counts of Anjou, Brittany and Nevers, and descending on the Auvergne seized the castle of Pont-du-Château and drove

the count out of Clermont. In 1126 he returned with a larger army and burned Montferrand; and although William IX of Aquitaine intervened on behalf of the count of Auvergne he forced the latter to appear before the royal court at Orléans and to make peace.

The duchy of Normandy posed the greatest challenge to Louis outside the royal lands. In 1106 Henry I of England, William the Conqueror's youngest son, captured Normandy from the less effectual Robert Curthose, his brother. At first Henry agreed with Louis VI that the important castle of Gisors should be held by a neutral castellan, but Henry soon occupied it and Louis called on him to account for his actions. Henry refused, and war broke out. Initially Louis, with the support of the count of Anjou and Theobald, count of Blois, was successful. In 1109 he overran part of the Norman Vexin. But Theobald of Blois switched his support to Henry, and the English king also had the support of castellans, including Guy of Rochefort and Hugh of Le Puiset, together with Hugh, count of Troyes. Louis defeated the castellans in the field but was pushed back by Henry I. In 1113 peace was sealed, in which Louis recognised Henry's suzerainty over Maine and Brittany.

Another period of hostilities occurred between 1116 and 1120. Louis encouraged the rebellious Norman nobles and supported William Clito, Robert's son, as counterclaimant to Normandy. A long series of sieges and sporadic fighting ended in 1119 when Louis's army was crushed by Henry I's forces in pitched battle at Brémule. Louis was angry and humiliated but laid his case before Pope Calixtus II, conveniently holding a council at Reims. Orderic Vitalis describes the proceedings of the council, recounting Louis's speech in which he accuses Henry of violent aggression and lawless behaviour. Henry too appeared before Calixtus at a later date, and the pope did little more than persuade the two sides to negotiate.

In 1120 Louis agreed to receive the homage of William, Henry's heir, and to cede Gisors to Henry. These were poor terms, but Henry was in his turn to lose a great deal, both politically and emotionally, from the death of his son William, drowned in 1120. For this left the English king with no direct male heir to succeed him: he was to pass on his inheritance to his daughter Matilda, widow of the emperor Henry V, whom in 1127–8 he married to Geoffrey 'the Fair' Plantagenet, who would become count of Anjou in 1129 when his father Fulk went to Palestine. In 1123 Louis managed to gather the support of Fulk of Anjou and the treacherous Waleran, count of Meulan, together with other Norman nobles, for another attempt to replace Henry I with William Clito. This was not successful, but later in his reign Louis continued to fight sporadically against Henry I, who caused considerable problems in Flanders and kept up his policy of alliance with both Theobald of Blois and the disaffected nobles of the royal principality.

In 1124 Louis did, however, enjoy a major triumph over the emperor Henry V, who moved towards France from the east in support of Henry I, his father-in-law, and in the hope of building up his lands in Lorraine. Louis VI called on all his vassals to gather at Reims in his support, and their positive response was a measure not only of the size of the threat but also the increased prestige of the king. Contingents from Nevers and Vermandois and Flanders, and from various sees

including Reims, Châlons, Laon, Soissons and Orléans, from Paris and Saint-Denis turned out in his support, and even Theobald II of Blois sent troops. According to Suger, Louis bore the *oriflamme*, the standard of the Vexin (which belonged to the abbey of Saint-Denis and was later reputed to have belonged to Charlemagne), and made fervent and patriotic speeches. The emperor fell back before such an imposing force.

In 1127 the king intervened in Flanders as well, the chronicler Galbert of Bruges providing a colourful account of the events that unfolded. Following the murder of Charles the Good, Louis's kinsman and friend, in the church of Saint-Donatien at Bruges whilst at mass, Louis immediately rushed to Flanders. His hopes were it seems to punish the wrongdoers, to try to seize Charles's treasure, and possibly even to be elected count himself. In none of these was he initially successful, but Flanders was in a state of complete confusion and he managed effectively to assert his authority for a short time at least. Charles had left no direct heir, and there were many claimants to his office, but the king arranged for William Clito, a great-grandson of Baldwin of Lille, to be elected. Louis and William Clito together fought several other claimants, captured the murderers and had them killed, and subjugated Flanders. Here Louis had seemingly imposed his will inside a principality but, as when Philip I had interfered with the Flemish succession in 1071 (pp. 50, 117), his success was not long-lived. Fighting soon flared up again as a growing number of Flemish, including the important towns, declared themselves in favour of Thierry of Alsace.

When Louis attempted to settle the dispute himself, he was accused of improper interference with the comital election. In 1128 he was occupied with other problems as well, and he managed little more than a show of arms joined with an excommunication for Thierry. But William Clito was wounded and died, and the king then decided to accept Thierry as the new count, receiving homage from him for his lands. Although Louis had exercised considerable influence in Flanders for a while, the concerted force of the towns and some of the nobility compelled him in the end to accept a candidate he did not want as count.

With Theobald of Blois, his intractable enemy, Louis VI was less firm. The chronicler of Morigny blamed Theobald for the constant warfare in France, and certainly the count was involved in most of the hostile coalitions against the king.[11] So angry was Louis after his defeat by the English king in 1119, with Theobald's support, that he ordered Chartres to be burned, and only the pleas of the chapter of Notre-Dame saved it. Louis never effectively brought Theobald to book, and in 1125, when the count joined Champagne to Blois, the king's difficulties with him increased.

Louis was able to summon a far wider group of vassals for aid than his father and, more importantly, they tended in general to obey his commands. In his own lands Louis VI was still to a degree the regional prince fighting for control, striving to establish his ascendancy, but with a far greater impact than his predecessors. In the rest of France he increasingly exercised his royal powers, defending the church, calling vassals to his court and intervening outside his own direct sphere

of influence as a response to appeals made to him. And whilst his presence was still not felt in many parts of France, still his prestige, and the prestige of the monarchy, was growing.

Louis VII, 1137–80: politics of grandeur and illusion, 1137–51

Stephen of Paris wrote of Louis VII:

> He was so pious, so just, so catholic and benign, that if you were to see his simplicity of behaviour and dress, you would think, unless you already knew him, that he was not a king, but a man of religion. He was a lover of justice, a defender of the weak.[12]

Odo of Deuil, Suger's protégé and successor as abbot of Saint-Denis, who had accompanied Louis on crusade, said that his faith shone out from him, whilst a monastic annalist describes him as father of the church. Born the second son of Louis VI in 1120–1, the future Louis VII was educated at the cathedral school in Paris, probably to fit him for an ecclesiastical career. The death of his elder brother Philip in 1131 made him heir to the throne, to which he succeeded as a youth in 1137. All our sources suggest that, besides being a man of great piety, for which he was mocked by some, he was just, with simple tastes, yet with a high view of monarchy.

The Englishman Walter Map, a normally harsh and satirical critic of kings and clerics, found much to praise in Louis. He emphasised his love of justice, which was so strong that, when he found that the buildings of his palace at Fontainebleau encroached on the lands of a poor peasant, he ordered them to be pulled down. Count Theobald of Champagne found him asleep in a wood, attended by only two knights, and reproached him for this recklessness. Louis, says Map, answered: '"I may sleep alone quite safely, for no one bears me any ill-will". It was a simple matter, the utterance of pure conscience. What other king can claim so much for himself?' When Map was staying with the king in Paris Louis talked about the wealth of rulers: 'Your lord, the king of England, who wants for nothing, has men, horses, gold, silk, jewels, fruits, game and everything else. We in France have nothing but bread and wine and gaiety'.[13]

Contemporaries found much to praise in Louis VII; historians have been somewhat less enthusiastic about him. The classic view of him was that of a colourless nonentity, under the influence first of Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, then of Abbot Suger, then of Bernard of Clairvaux, formulating his policies and waging his wars at their behest; and by allowing the formation of the 'Angevin empire' (as the Plantagenet lands in France are often known), committing a dangerous political error. More recent accounts have however been more favourable, suggesting that this king's positive achievements were more significant than his failures, that he built up royal prestige and consolidated the royal domain, without which the eventual triumphs of his son Philip Augustus would not have been possible. Sassier suggests that

although no contemporaries ever admired him for any political acumen Louis was widely respected for his upright character, high moral principles and piety – although his popularity can be overstated. For example, at the abbey of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif in Sens, his memory was long detested and reviled for his support of the commune, resulting in the murder of Abbot Herbert in 1149.[14] Both Pacaut and Sassier see him as having become far more resolute during the second part of the reign, a time when he also successfully consolidated his domain.[15]

Louis's first wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, frustrated with his pious behaviour, is said to have complained that he was more monk than king. This evokes his great-grandson Louis IX (pp. 292–305): but could Louis VII ever have attained a reputation similar to the Capetian royal saint? Certainly, Louis VII shared – and perhaps inspired – some of Louis IX's personal and political qualities: his piety yet firmness with the church, his role as a crusading king, his simplicity of dress and behaviour, his love of justice. But he was seemingly more easily influenced and less politically astute than Louis IX, and he was capable both of deeds of impetuous rashness and violence and of periods of indecisive inactivity, manifesting boredom with his royal role. To these, his descendant was it seems less prone.

Louis came to the throne in 1137 with glittering prospects. The great rivals of the French kings, the counts of Blois-Champagne and the Anglo-Norman royal house, posed little immediate threat. Theobald of Blois-Champagne had perhaps hoped to gain the English crown, and when his brother Stephen seized it had turned more towards the king than to his own momentarily successful brother. Domestic and political hostilities were developing between Stephen and Geoffrey the Fair of Anjou and his wife the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England and Henry's designated heir, over the title to the kingdom of England and the duchy of Normandy. Louis himself was thus in a strong position.

Furthermore, William, duke of Aquitaine had on his deathbed left his daughter and heiress Eleanor to Louis VI's custody; and she was married to the future Louis VII in 1137. So significant was this alliance that Louis styled himself as duke of Aquitaine as well as king of France throughout their marriage. A woman of strong personality, attractive, vigorous and vivid, Eleanor did almost everything a queen should, bearing the king two daughters (but no sons), overseeing her duchy, and acting as a patron of court culture. She seems also to have exercised a strong influence over the king during the first part of his reign, to have involved him in impetuous and poorly-judged schemes, many to further the interests of Aquitaine rather than of the whole kingdom or of the royal principality.[16]

With Eleanor at his side, Louis indulged in politics of grandeur and illusion, managing to alienate many of his great vassals with remarkable rapidity. By investing Eustace of Blois, Stephen's son, with Normandy, Louis angered the Empress Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou, whilst Theobald of Blois, who in 1138 refused to give the king aid to crush a rebellion in Poitou, showed a mounting hostility. In 1141 the king intervened in Toulouse, to which Eleanor had a claim, but the results were indecisive. Events finally got out of hand when the king involved himself in the election to the archbishopric of Bourges. He was anxious to extend

his influence in Berry, and wanted Cadurc, who had replaced Stephen of Garlande as royal chancellor, to be elected. When the cathedral chapter chose Peter of La Châtre, the papal candidate, Louis vowed that Peter would never enter Bourges; but Theobald of Blois-Champagne received Peter in his lands.

The rift between Theobald and Louis was also widened by the marital problems of Ralph, count of Vermandois, Louis's seneschal. He repudiated his wife, Eleanor of Champagne, Theobald's niece, for Petronilla of Aquitaine, sister of Eleanor of Aquitaine, and managed to find bishops who were prepared to marry them. Eleanor of Champagne and her uncle Theobald appealed to Pope Innocent II, whose legate excommunicated Ralph and suspended from office the bishops who had performed the marriage. Louis now entered the conflict against Theobald on behalf of Ralph, his cousin. In 1142–3 he burned and ravaged parts of Champagne with extreme ferocity, according to William of Saint-Thierry. The campaign culminated with the burning of the church at Vitry, with 1,500 people caught in the flames, an event that apparently greatly horrified the king. Nevertheless, it cost Bernard of Clairvaux and Suger a considerable effort to persuade Louis VII and Theobald to enter peace negotiations.

Eventually Louis left Champagne on the understanding that Ralph's excommunication would be lifted. Now Ralph refused to give up Petronilla, so his excommunication was renewed, and the interdict on the royal lands remained in force. Louis occupied part of Champagne again and forbade any appointments to be made in its episcopal sees. In 1144 the next pope, Celestine II, together with Suger and Bernard, managed to bring the king to make peace. Louis removed his troops from Champagne and gave in over the Bourges election. Ralph and Petronilla stayed together. Louis had gained nothing, and whilst he had been occupied with Champagne, Geoffrey the Fair of Anjou had overrun Normandy. Louis was compelled to recognise this as a fait accompli, although he managed to extract control of the important strategic town of Gisors in return.

The burning of Vitry seems to have been a profound shock to the king, which awakened his piety and conscience, increased the influence of Bernard of Clairvaux and Abbot Suger over him, and had a significant influence on his decision to lead a crusade to the Holy Land, in expiation for his sins. Odo of Deuil, who accompanied Louis on crusade, explained that the French king was full of zeal for the Christian faith and longed to save the Holy Places. Many other motives for Louis have been suggested and include his wish to redeem his political humiliations at home, by embodying Christian leadership and royal glory; fulfilment of his vow to visit the Holy Land as a pilgrim; and a conviction that the royal office should embody crusading ideals through the monarch's personal leadership of this ultimate Christian duty.[17]

This was a groundbreaking moment, the first time that any king had been involved directly in a crusade, and also constituted a major risk to the stability of the realm. When at Bourges on Christmas Day 1145 Louis initially announced his intention of going he was greeted by both nobles and ecclesiastics with very little enthusiasm. Yet from the western viewpoint there was a clear need for an army to go to relieve the kingdom of Jerusalem. In 1144 Edessa had fallen to the Atabeg

Turks under Zengi and his son Nur-ed-Din, who were moving down from the north, and Mélisande, queen regent of Jerusalem, wrote to Pope Eugenius III asking for help. Eugenius directed an appeal to Louis VII, who responded with enthusiasm. He called together an assembly at Vézelay for Easter 1146, and here Bernard of Clairvaux, encouraged by Eugenius, himself a Cistercian monk, preached the Second Crusade, now with dramatic success. Some 700 knights from the royal lands alone signed up, while the Emperor Conrad III, prevailed upon to join the western forces, raised a larger force still (Source 4.1).

SOURCE 4.1 *RETOUR DE LA CROISÉ* SCULPTURED RELIEF, THIRD QUARTER OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Having taken the cross in 1147 with Louis VII, Count Hugh I of Vaudémont travelled to Palestine on the Second Crusade, but he failed to return to France

IMAGE 4.1 *Retour de la croisé* sculptured relief, third quarter of the twelfth century

© Palais des ducs de Lorraine – Musée Lorrain, Nancy. Photo, Michel Bourguet

(continued)

(continued)

in 1149 and was believed to have perished. Between 1161 and 1163 however he made a reappearance and was reunited with his wife Adeline of Lorraine, who had not remarried. Hugh died in 1165 and was buried at the priory of Belval (Vosges). This charming sculptured relief, once in Belval's cloister but today in the Musée Lorrain in Nancy, was perhaps part of a tomb and is generally believed to represent the reunion of Hugh and Adeline. Certainly, the cross displayed prominently on the man's chest represents a returning crusader, and he holds a pilgrim's staff on one side whilst embracing his wife on the other.[18]

The crusaders set off for the Holy Land in 1147.[19] The expedition proved a débâcle. The emperor at Constantinople, Manuel, was hostile, the crusader states in Palestine were divided and generally unsupportive, and the French and the German forces were unable to agree between themselves. Both lost large parts of their armies on their perilous journeys, and both suffered separate defeats, the French near Laodicea and the Germans at Dorylaeum. They met at Jerusalem, and were defeated again outside Damascus in 1148, a symptom of poor planning and disastrous leadership. Conrad III now went back to Germany; many others also departed, but Louis VII stayed on in Palestine for almost a year, borrowing money to support the defence of the Crusader states and making pilgrimages to the holy places. Despite his military failures, this greatly enhanced his reputation for pious crusading kingship and gave him a longlasting affection for and personal links with the Holy Land.

Abbot Suger, left behind in France as co-regent, a role for which he was to a degree miscast, had much to contend with. Robert of Dreux, Louis's brother, had returned to France from the east and was fomenting rebellion with a group of dissident nobles. Suger called an assembly at Soissons in 1149 and reminded the French nobility of their duty to the absent king, whose lands and goods were protected by his crusading vow, and the threat died down. The regent had also managed to find the vast sums required to fund the crusade, in part from the monetary reserves accumulated by Louis VI. But Louis's continued absence posed Suger particular challenges, and at Easter 1149 he called on the king to return to France. Louis at last heeded him, making the hazardous return by ship. On the king's return, the abbot retired to Saint-Denis. Here he died in 1151, depriving the king of a valued administrator and loyal counsellor: and these Louis sorely needed.[20]

Louis VII, 1137–80: Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Plantagenets, 1151–80

On Louis's return from the Holy Land, Suger and Ralph of Vermandois were replaced by a new group of advisers, headed by the king's brother, Henry, archbishop of Reims, and later William aux Blanches-Mains. William was the brother of the count of Champagne and had been a protégé of Saint Bernard and a monk

of Clairvaux; from 1168 to 1176 he was bishop of Chartres and archbishop of Sens; and in 1176 he moved to the archbishopric of Reims. Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders, was also a close associate of the king later in his reign, and a valuable ally against the Plantagenets. Louis was met also with an increased threat from the build-up of Plantagenet power in Normandy. Geoffrey had handed over the duchy to Henry his son in 1150, but Louis again put forward Eustace, Stephen's son, and waged war vigorously on his behalf. This was to no avail, and in 1151 peace was made with the victors Geoffrey and Henry. Yet from it, Louis gained the Norman Vexin, including Gisors.

There now followed a personal and political disaster for the king. When he had been on crusade there had been clear signs of a growing rift between him and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine, who was known to dislike and to mock his piety and monastic demeanour. Even more problematic were contemporary accusations against her of lewd and improper conduct at the court of Raymond of Antioch, leader of a powerful Crusader state in Palestine. When in 1148 Louis and Eleanor were at Antioch in Palestine, rumours had circulated that she was showing an unnatural fondness for Raymond, and these had stuck. Almost certainly confected and embroidered, these rumours seem to have originated in Eleanor's own independence of mind and her support for her uncle's counsels above those of her husband, breaching contemporary norms of female behaviour. They may have gained further traction through their conflation with the compelling myth of Arthur's adulterous Queen Guinevere, invented and popularised by writers such as Geoffrey of Monmouth. All this was of such concern to Louis that in 1148 he had removed Eleanor by force from Antioch and taken her to Jerusalem.[21]

In 1149 Pope Eugenius III had personally reconciled Louis and Eleanor while they were on their way back from the Holy Land, and a second daughter was born to the couple. But by 1151 the king had had enough of Eleanor and the marriage. A huge, perhaps the greatest, concern may have been their lack of a male heir, which the king may have seen as a symptom of divine disapproval. Louis withdrew his own servants from her duchy and in 1152 the council of Beaugency declared the marriage null and void on the grounds of consanguinity. A few months later Henry Plantagenet, now count of Anjou after the death of his father Geoffrey the Fair in 1151, married Eleanor in a political and romantic coup that would bring far-reaching repercussions, including a brood of turbulent sons.[22]

Louis has often been accused of having allowed the marriage to happen – he was suzerain of the duchy – and this has seemed to many historians an act of utter folly. But in reality, he lacked the power to prevent it, and was clearly shocked, angered and dismayed. The French king now struck back as best he could by again invading Normandy in alliance with Stephen of Blois, king of England, but then Eustace, Stephen's son, died and Henry was accepted as the English king's heir. Louis's resistance crumbled, and in 1154 Henry became king of England as well as the greatest single landholder in France. His vast conglomeration of lands stretching from Durham to Dax entirely overshadowed those of his suzerain the French king.

What were Henry's goals in France? It is clear that he was intent in the short term on consolidating his power in his heterogeneous collection of lands in France, on seizing castles and counties. Yet the Capetians had come to power in France in part through the failure of the Carolingian line, in part through their powerful position as regional princes. Could the Plantagenets have done the same?

Until 1165, when Philip Augustus was born to Louis's third wife, Adela of Champagne, the French king had no male heirs, and had he died, a succession crisis would have ensued. Even crowns, as Stephen of Blois had shown, might be won by the most active and forceful claimant. Henry II had in turn succeeded Stephen in England, and in 1160 his eldest son the infant Henry, known later as the Young King, was betrothed to the equally young Margaret, Louis's daughter with his second wife Constance of Castile. Although this alliance gave Henry II's heir a potential claim to the French crown through marriage, in the event the king of England showed clear respect for Louis's office and for his rights as suzerain for his French lands and gave no signs of wishing to seize the French crown. So Louis had no need to fight for the survival of his right to the throne; he had rather to prevent himself from being overshadowed inside France.

In the short term, in the face of this regional prince extraordinary, Louis lost much of the courage and vigour that had underlain many of his exploits early in the reign. This change has sometimes been attributed to the pacific influence of the Cistercians and other ecclesiastics upon him. Yet the contrasts between the two parts of his reign should not be overstressed. In his first years as king Louis VII had never been as effective in military terms as his father Louis VI, and later in his reign he continued to wage war sporadically, and not entirely fruitlessly, for the most part against Henry II. He did not have the resources effectively to combat the power of the English king. Prompted by a strong sense of honour which was not always shared by his rival, he allowed concessions to the Plantagenets, and would negotiate as often as fight. But at the end of the reign the possibilities of curtailing Henry's power began to emerge, and Louis took a firmer approach.

In the late 1150s Plantagenet power continued to expand and Louis appeared at his weakest, hemmed in by his rivals.[23] Geoffrey, Henry's brother, became lord of Nantes in Brittany in 1156, and when he died childless in 1158 Henry claimed the overlordship of Brittany and overran it. Louis put up no resistance to this, and when Henry appeared to be on the verge of trying the same tactics in Toulouse, basing his claim here on those of Eleanor's family, Louis nevertheless tried to remain on peaceful terms with Henry. Not until Henry set off for Toulouse in 1159 did Louis take firm action. Raymond V appealed to him and he managed to save the city by occupying it himself; the English king, unwilling to besiege his suzerain, fell back with his army. This was a significant event (p. 192) but Henry's respect for an overlord only went so far. In 1162 the English king had celebrated the marriage of his heir, the young Henry, to Louis's daughter Margaret, and he seized the Norman Vexin, her dowry, for himself. The rupture with Louis now emerged openly.

The French king now began to build up supporters against this rival. His marriage to Adela of Champagne in 1160 brought him the alliance of Henry the Liberal,

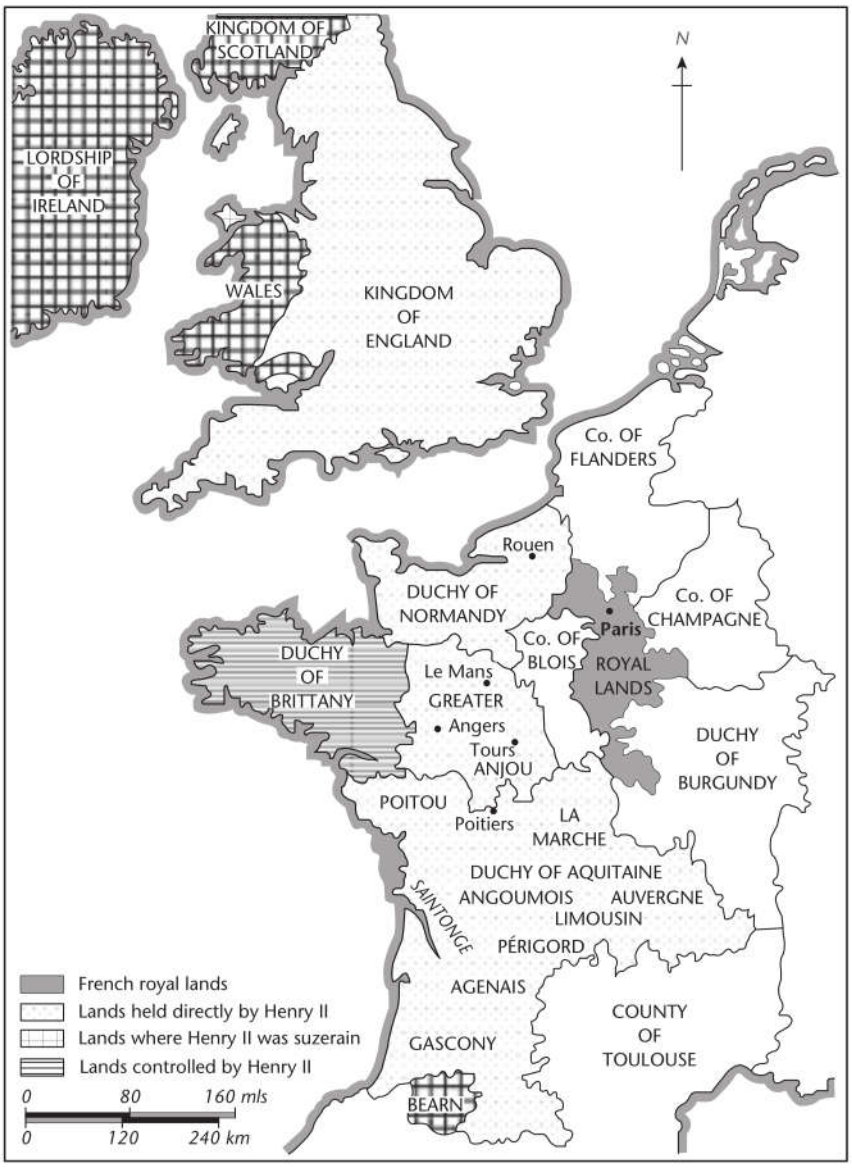
count of Champagne, and in 1165 was to produce him his long-desired and critical male heir, Philip, nicknamed '*Dieudonné*' (God-given). Odo II and Hugh III of Burgundy were favourably inclined towards Louis VII; he also collected a following of nobles in both Burgundy and the Languedoc. Frederick Barbarossa, elected emperor in 1152, negotiated with Henry and Louis in turn. Matters were further complicated when in 1159 another papal schism erupted (p. 235): Frederick recognised Victor IV; Henry II and Louis VII accepted Alexander III in 1160. In 1162 Alexander was driven out of Italy by Frederick and took refuge in France.

When Alexander gave his sanction to Henry II for the marriage of the Young King Henry and Margaret, Louis negotiated with the emperor, and Henry of Champagne arranged a meeting of both rulers and both popes at Saint-Jean-de-Losne in 1162. Precisely what happened is obscure, but the convention did not go well; Alexander refused to appear, but the apparent discourtesy of the emperor and his adviser Rainald of Dassel to the French king (Rainald called Louis *regulus*) drove Louis back to supporting Alexander. The pope now put himself under Louis's protection and took up residence at Sens; in 1163 he sent Louis a 'golden rose' to mark the help he had given to the vicar of Christ.[24]

The next year Louis VII gained another useful, although also rather embarrassing, ecclesiastical refugee in his lands. Archbishop Thomas Becket fled to France from the wrath of Henry II and stayed first at Pontigny, then at Sens. John of Salisbury applied the title *rex Christianissimus*, 'most Christian king', to Louis, who was marked out as an ally of the church with his opposition to Henry assuming a moral dimension. Yet Alexander III gave Louis no backing in his sporadic skirmishes against Henry for several years, since as the pope he needed to retain the support of this powerful man. Later the pope's position became more secure, for in 1167 Frederick was forced out of Italy allowing Alexander III to return to Rome.

At the peace of Montmirail in 1169 Henry's sons did homage to Louis for the lands their father had parcelled out to them, and Louis was later able to make use of this bond. Then in 1170 Becket was murdered: Henry was blamed by all Christendom while Louis, who had protected the martyr, gained great general approval. He went into the last decade of his reign in a much-strengthened moral position, and even though the royal principality was still overshadowed by the Plantagenet lands (Map 4.1) his opposition to Henry and his sons also became more effective. He began actively to foment discord between Henry II and his family, and probably played an important part in bringing about the rebellion of the Young King and his brothers in 1173–4 that posed a dangerous threat to Henry's power. But while Louis also campaigned against Henry, he still did not lend public and wholehearted support to the rebels, and he helped the Young King, Richard and Geoffrey to arrange the peace that followed Henry II's victory in 1174.

This was a missed opportunity, for despite his continuing problems with his sons, Henry's authority again began to increase. He bought the overlordship of the strategically important county of La Marche in 1177, and in the same year he threatened Louis with a strong army in support of his right to the French Vexin, which he claimed as Margaret's dowry, and to Bourges and its region, which he



MAP 4.1 The lands of Henry II and Louis VII in the 1170s

claimed was to be the dowry of Alice, Margaret's sister, betrothed to Richard. Louis had no appetite for a fight, and his ally, the church, now served him well. Alexander III, who in 1177 had finally concluded peace with Frederick Barbarossa, threatened Henry with an interdict, and the English king fell back.

The last years of Louis's reign were more peaceful. In 1179 the king, whose health was now deteriorating, held a great assembly of lay and ecclesiastical magnates in Paris, and his son Philip was elected, anointed and crowned as his successor: the

last coronation of the heir during the reigning king's lifetime.[25] In 1180 the old king died. Where he had just managed to contain Plantagenet power Philip, by a combination of good fortune and skill, was to achieve vastly more.

Philip II 'Augustus', 1180–1223: campaigning and crusading, 1180–1200

Philip Augustus has long been a popular character with French historians although, surprisingly for a figure of his historical significance, only since the last two decades of the twentieth century has he been the subject of major scholarly studies.[26] Despite his achievements he was, however, far less popular with contemporaries; his personality does not seem to have been appealing. Baldwin characterises him as an 'astute, manipulative, calculating, penurious and ungallant ruler', characteristics to which even the most effusive of contemporary writers allude and that modified their early enthusiasm for their new king.

In his youth he is said to have been pale, sickly and timid, yet in the first decade of the reign Rigord of Saint-Denis, self-appointed chronicler of the king's deeds, was taken with the young man's intelligence and prudence. In his text he variously described Philip as God-given, as the most Christian king, and as Augustus because he was august, because he was born in that month and because he augmented the crown's possessions: although this epithet, universally employed by modern historians, was barely used by contemporaries.[27]

The augmentation of which Rigord speaks was the acquisition of Artois and Vermandois, through Philip's marriage in 1180 to the young heiress Isabella of Hainault, niece of Philip's adviser Philip count of Flanders. In 1184, after ousting the count of Flanders from his court, the king announced his intention to divorce Isabella, who shamed him by dressing in a pauper's shift and publicly begging for Philip's mercy in the streets of Senlis. Seeing the huge popular support for her from the people of Senlis, and also perhaps fearing the loss of her dowry, Philip thought better of the divorce. The two were reconciled, but having presented him with a son and heir, the future Louis VIII, Isabella died in 1190.[28]

Isabella's death and its aftermath were to cause Philip even greater marital difficulties and to fuel hostility from the church to the king and his reputation. On his return from the Third Crusade he developed an extreme nervousness and lost his shock of hair, symptoms of a major disorder that perhaps contributed to the violent antipathy he developed towards his second wife Ingeborg of Denmark. Able and determined, Ingeborg was said by some contemporaries to have been beautiful and virtuous. Yet, as described by the anonymous author of the *Deeds of Pope Innocent III*, during their wedding ceremony in 1193, Philip 'began violently to tremble, abhor and pale at her sight, . . . deeply disturbed'.[29] Without delay he cast her aside on grounds of affinity, in 1196 finding complaisant bishops to marry him to Agnes of Méran instead.

Agnes produced a daughter and a son, Philip Hurepel, before her death in 1201, and they were later to be legitimised by the pope. Whilst she was alive Philip – as had Robert the Pious and Philip I before him – aroused major disapproval from the pope, in this case Innocent III, with a concomitant excommunication. Later

in his reign he despaired of obtaining Innocent's permission for a divorce. Despite his continuing personal antipathy towards her, in 1213, shortly after the birth of a son to his heir Prince Louis, he reinstated Ingeborg to the formal office of queen, thereby gaining the approbation of the holy see and the French people.[30]

As his reign progressed, Philip's marital difficulties, cynical behaviour and heavy taxation of the church alienated even Rigord, in whose chronicle he was from 1191 simply referred to as *rex Francorum*, king of the Franks. Later Philip appointed as his official historiographer his chaplain, William the Breton, who reworked and added to Rigord's chronicle as the *Philippidos*, a vast work in verse that appeared just after Philip's death in 1226 and which depicts the king in a far more heroic light (p. 204). Most contemporary chroniclers, however, dwelt on his failings. Giles of Paris in his *Karolinus* wrote that Philip had augmented the kingdom, but he was an evil man who showed intolerance and covetousness and had brought disgrace on France by his repudiation of Ingeborg.

Amongst the Anglo-Normans, Bertran of Born described him as inert and cowardly, while in his *Chronicle of Tours* Payen Gâtineau, a canon of Tours, presents a more favourable but still not wholly uncritical view. Philip, he said, was physically attractive and loved wine, women and good cheer – and money. Quick to judge, he was harsh with rebels and a fomenter of discord against his enemies, but he never let an enemy die in prison, and he helped the poor and needy and protected the church. Other contemporaries tell us that, unlike his Plantagenet rivals, he had an aversion to strong language, and that he refused to spend money on frivolous public entertainments.

Philip seems to have nurtured powerful ambitions from early in his reign. Gerald of Wales has a pleasing, if perhaps apocryphal, tale in which Philip tells a group of barons of his daydream that God would grant him the glory of restoring the French kingdom to the extent and greatness that it had had at the time of Charlemagne.[31] Convincingly portraying him as a ruler of very great ability, with strong political acumen, great capabilities as a military strategist and increasing competence in leading on the battlefield, Bradbury suggests that through his remarkable achievements he fulfilled such ambitions.[32] But the key role of the future Louis VIII in the later years of his father's reign should not be overlooked either: despite the brevity of his time as king, between about 1210 and 1226 his military and political achievements were considerable.

Philip was crowned king in 1179 when Louis VII's strength was failing fast. Shortly before this he had caught a chill when out hunting and Louis, fearing his only heir would die, crossed the Channel to Canterbury on pilgrimage to Becket's shrine. Philip recovered, and it was soon his father's turn first to retire to his monastery at Barbeaux, then to die. Philip's marriage to Isabella of Hainault, daughter of Baldwin V, count of Hainault, and niece of Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders, brought him Artois as the queen's dowry, and was to give him a vital claim to the family's other lands. This alliance and Louis VII's death left the young king under the tutelage of Philip of Alsace, but this he would not tolerate for long.

By making an alliance with Henry II at Gisors, the young Philip alienated both the counts of Flanders and Champagne, who formed a hostile coalition with

Stephen of Sancerre in 1182; there was sporadic fighting between the two sides until 1185. In 1182 countess Isabella of Hainault, Philip of Hainault's wife, died. She was in her own right heiress to Vermandois, Amiénois and Valois, and although her husband claimed these lands they passed initially to her sister, Eleanor, countess of Beaumont. The king also intervened on Eleanor's behalf but claimed some lands himself on the basis of both blood and marriage ties. In 1185 he defeated Philip of Hainault in battle, and a settlement was reached at Amiens in 1186.

By it, the king was to retain Artois, his wife's dowry, and when Louis (VIII) was born in 1187 this looked as though it would be a permanent gain. Eleanor, countess of Beaumont, kept Valois, and Vermandois was divided. Philip of Alsace took the counties of Péronne and Saint-Quentin and the town of Ham, and the king the important city and county of Amiens and 65 castles, the county of Montdidier and the reversion of Philip of Alsace's share of Vermandois. This was something of a triumph, and in the same year the king made another successful expedition into Burgundy, and brought the duke, who was plotting with the emperor, to heel.

Henry II had given Philip Augustus his support in the early 1180s and initial relations between the two kings had seemed good. But in 1186–7 this harmony broke down in the aftermath of the deaths of both the Young King Henry and of Geoffrey of Brittany. The first had offered Philip the prospect of a congenial successor to Henry II, the second had been a valued fellow conspirator and friend.[33] Richard, Henry II's eldest surviving son, was a ruthless and dangerous rival, and when he failed to fulfil his promises to marry Alice, Philip's sister, Philip demanded that both she and the Norman Vexin, her dowry, should be returned to him. Further problems emerged over the overlordship of Brittany and Toulouse, and Philip determined to make war on Henry. He marched into Berry, and besieged Châteauroux. A truce was made shortly afterwards largely on Richard's initiative and in 1188 both kings agreed to go on crusade.

Richard and Philip now became close allies, and when Henry appeared to be favouring his youngest son John above Richard, Philip, following the example of his father, was able to turn this family quarrel to good account. Richard paid Philip homage for Henry II's continental lands, and they joined forces against the now elderly and sick English king, overrunning Normandy, Maine and Touraine. In July 1189 Henry II met Richard and Philip near Tours and conceded on all points: Richard was to be his successor, and although the Plantagenets were to keep the Norman Vexin, Philip was to retain his conquests in Berry and to be recognised as suzerain of the Auvergne. Philip had made his first gains at the expense of the Plantagenets; and two days later Henry II, after hearing that even John had rebelled against him, died.

Richard[34] now became king of England and Philip's vassal for Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, Poitou and Aquitaine. His reputation as a leader and knight wholly eclipsed Philip's, and his military prowess was formidable. The French king, intent on reducing his great power in the French kingdom, would clearly need to use other weapons against him. Meanwhile the French and the English monarchs were both committed to a major crusading venture, and in 1190 Philip and Richard set off for Palestine together on the Third Crusade.[35] Philip left his mother Adela

of Champagne and his uncle the archbishop of Reims as regents, his wife having died shortly before. Eleanor of Aquitaine, released from the close custody of her late husband Henry II, performed a similar role for her son Richard I.

The two kings sailed first for Sicily, where their always fragile relationship soon broke down. Richard again refused to marry Philip's sister Alice, and instead made Berengaria of Navarre his wife. This was a shrewd alliance, aimed probably to protect the southern borders of Aquitaine and Gascony. Richard, it was said, refused to marry Alice because he alleged she had been his father's mistress, and he gained the support of Tancred of Sicily and Philip, count of Flanders. The French king was now compelled to revise his agreement with Richard. By the Treaty of Messina in 1191 Richard paid Philip 10,000 marks and agreed to restore Alice and the town of Gisors to him, but the Norman Vexin was to remain in Plantagenet hands unless the English king died without heirs. If Richard had two sons his lands were to be divided between them, and both were to hold their lands in France directly from the French king. In the long term, Philip hoped to divide the Plantagenet lands; in the short term he was ready to exploit the rivalry of Richard and John for his own ends.

The crusaders arrived at Acre, their first objective, in 1191 (Image 4.2), Richard having taken Cyprus, enhancing his reputation and swelling his coffers, on the way. The city fell in July and the booty was divided. Philip, deeply concerned about his authority within his kingdom, then returned to France, leaving Richard with his mind fixed on recapturing Jerusalem. Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders, had died on crusade, and Philip's regents had occupied Artois in the name of Prince Louis. Péronne and Saint-Quentin, the parts of Vermandois that Philip of Alsace had been allowed in 1186, also passed into the king's hands. When he arrived home, Philip reached a new agreement with Eleanor, countess of Beaumont. She renounced all

IMAGE 4.2 Arrival of Philip Augustus at Acre, 1191, from a fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Grandes Chroniques de France*

© British Library Board: Royal MS 16G vi, f. 350r

claims to the Amiénois and a large portion of Vermandois; the rest, including the county of Saint-Quentin, she was to hold as a fief from the king, to whom it would pass on her death. This agreement was to be opposed by Baldwin VIII of Flanders, the new count, nephew of Philip of Hainault, but Philip's gradual build-up of lands and rights in northern France was continuing.

During his return journey from the east Philip had probably met Emperor Henry VI at Milan. Henry VI was the counterclaimant to Sicily and, angry at Richard's treaty with his rival Tancred of Lecce, agreed to support Philip against the English king. When Richard, on his way home, fell into the hands of an enemy, Duke Leopold of Austria, Philip may have been instrumental in arranging for him to be handed over to Henry VI, who held him prisoner until early in 1194. This allowed Philip to profit from his rival's absence.[36] Forging alliances with the frontier barons, he overran the Norman Vexin, seized the key strategic fortress of Gisors and allied with John, planning it seems to invade Normandy and England in defiance of his agreement with Richard, violating both feudal and canon law. By the time Richard returned in 1195 he had captured Évreux.

Richard now mobilised all the resources of the duchy of Normandy, and Philip was soon driven back; when in 1196 a truce was made almost all his conquests were lost. Despite Philip's efforts to secure the support of Count Baldwin IX of Flanders and Renaud of Dammartin, count of Boulogne, they were won over to Richard. In 1197 they attacked Philip's lands in northern France and the king invaded Flanders in retaliation, but nothing was settled. Richard overran the Norman Vexin, and eventually a truce was arranged in 1197. During this the English king strengthened his lines of defence, building as the pièce de résistance Château Gaillard (Source 4.2), modelled on crusader castles and seen by admiring contemporaries as impregnable.

SOURCE 4.2 CHÂTEAU GAILLARD, 1196

For many people, Château Gaillard exemplifies the medieval castle. But in many ways, it is exceptional. Most medieval castles were far less spectacular, and are more historically obscure. High above the River Seine between Paris and Rouen, Château Gaillard was built quickly and at great expense by King Richard I of England in 1196 to defend his Norman border, on lands seized from the archbishop of Rouen. The castle was a symbol of bravado and defiance again his rival the French king Philip Augustus. With a great keep at its centre and mighty concentric walls, it withstood a six-month siege before its capture by Philip just a few years later, in 1203–4. Its fall symbolised the new order in Plantagenet-Capetian relations.

Castles, in the sense of fortified residences used as a power base, first appear in France in the tenth century. The early ones were technologically

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(continued)

unsophisticated, constructed out of wood and earth. They have nevertheless been associated with a serious challenge to royal authority, as their owners, the castellans, used them to defy the authorities and to dominate a locality. The construction of castles continued and diversified throughout the Middle Ages, ranging from immense royal constructions such as Château Gaillard to less glamorous buildings hardly to be distinguished from a defensible manor house. At Guédelon in Burgundy, tourists can visit a project which is building a thirteenth-century castle from scratch, using authentic techniques – a remarkable example of experimental archaeology.

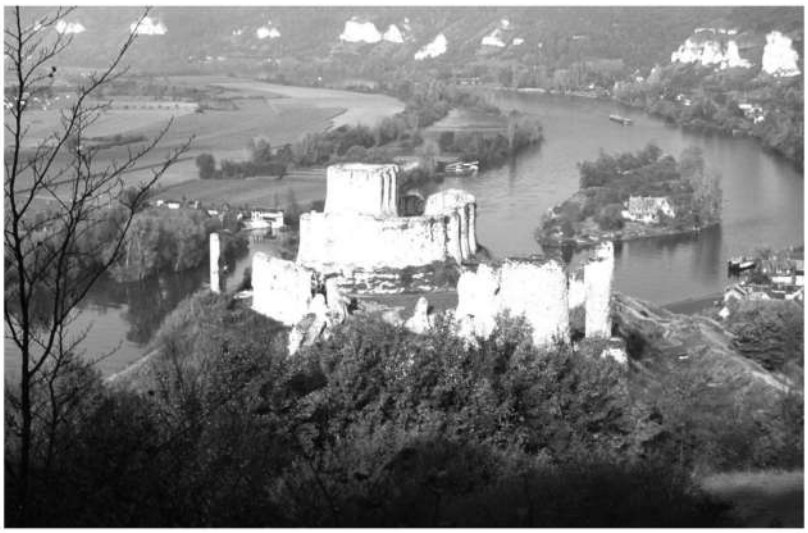


IMAGE 4.3 Château Gaillard, 1196

Photo © E. Hallam

When war started again in 1198 Philip suffered a humiliating defeat at Gisors and was driven out of the French Vexin as well. He was now in a most unfavourable position: even Paris seemed threatened. Matters were made worse by his attempts to repudiate Ingeborg of Denmark as his wife, and the resulting disputes with the papacy. In 1199 a truce was arranged between the two kings but Richard, whilst involved in curbing the revolt of the viscount of Limoges, who had the French king's backing, was unexpectedly killed.

Richard's death was an enormous stroke of luck for the French king. William the Breton declared that in 1199 'God visited the kingdom of the French, for King Richard died'.[37] Had he lived longer the political events of the early thirteenth century would surely have been very different.

Philip II 'Augustus', 1180–1223: conquests and triumphs, 1200–14

The French king now had a new rival, John. Flawed, erratic, rapacious and capable of extreme cruelty, when at his most effective John could be as determined and ruthless a man as his brother, but at other times he was petty, tyrannical and indecisive. Although capable of waging brilliant campaigns he often threw away success by inaction, and his vindictiveness meant that he often found it hard to win men's loyalties.[38] Philip exploited his weakness and turned the tables on his Plantagenet foes.

Richard's sudden demise had left his various possessions in a state of disarray. The by-now aged but ever-redoubtable Eleanor of Aquitaine rallied her duchy on behalf of John, and continued to rule it in his support until her death in 1203. The English and Norman nobility, thanks in part to the counsels of William Marshall, accepted him as king and duke and had him crowned. Arthur, count of Brittany, son of John's elder brother Geoffrey, was however favoured in Anjou, Maine and Touraine. Philip lent Arthur support and invested him with these lands, plus Normandy and Brittany. Taking advantage of the uncertainties, the French king, drawing on the support of many of the fickle marcher lords, invaded Normandy, retaking the Norman Vexin and Évreux. At the same time, Baldwin of Flanders and his followers switched back towards Philip, a significant shift.

Normandy and England had reached exhaustion from the financial demands of Richard, first for his crusade, then his ransom, and finally from ambitious projects such as the construction of his great castle of Château Gaillard. There were no reserves left in the Plantagenet treasury with which readily to increase disposable royal income. Additionally, the inroads Philip Augustus had made into Norman territory meant that John ruled a smaller duchy than Richard had, and with a disputed succession. John was obliged to make valuable concessions to magnates such as Ranulf III, earl of Chester, to ensure their support, including 'freezing' the very considerable debts they owed to the ducal treasury for their Norman holdings.[39]

Philip, however, was unable to maintain the loyalty of William of Les Roches, whom he had installed as seneschal of Anjou, who, along with Arthur, shifted his support to John. Philip Augustus retreated, and peace was concluded at Le Goulet in 1200. The terms of the settlement were momentous, for to secure his lands against Arthur's claims, John made major concessions to Philip, which neither Henry II nor Richard would ever have considered. John rendered homage to the French king for all of Richard's former fiefs; he paid him a very substantial relief of 20,000 marks, thus acknowledging Philip's right to decide the succession; and he agreed that although Arthur was his vassal, Arthur's rights would never be diminished except by judgement of the French court. He arranged to receive back into homage the troublesome count of Angoulême and the viscount of Limoges, but acknowledged that the counts of Flanders and Boulogne ought to be Philip's vassals, and not his own.

These groundbreaking legal gains for Philip were paralleled with material gains as well – the Évreçin and Évreux, the Norman Vexin and a greatly strengthened frontier with Normandy. Furthermore, John's niece, Blanche of Castile, was betrothed to the young prince Louis, later Louis VIII, and John gave her as a dowry lands in Berry, Issoudun, Graçay and Chauvigny, to be held by Philip until the marriage was consummated – as the two protagonists were still children.

The person who suffered the most as a result of the Treaty of Le Goulet was Arthur of Brittany, who was now to hold his much reduced lands from John. But by abandoning the cause of the Breton prince Philip had gained valuable rights of suzerainty over John and important lands, at a time when his continuing efforts to put aside Ingeborg had brought excommunication on his head and an interdict on his lands from Innocent III. In the same year Baldwin IX of Flanders relinquished all his rights over the Amiénois, Artois and the counties of Saint-Quentin and Péronne to Philip. By the end of 1200 the French royal lands had grown considerably in size.

The events of the next four years were to bring unprecedented and unforeseen advantages to the French king, who again profited from the errors of his adversaries. In 1200 John married Isabella, heiress to Angoulême, which was of vital strategic importance in Aquitaine, particularly after the French king had overrun much of Berry. This was in itself a prudent move, and was probably dictated more by politics than passion. This area was one of long-standing turbulence: Richard had waged regular warfare against the counts of Angoulême and the viscounts of Limoges since the 1170s.

But Isabella had previously been betrothed to Hugh of Lusignan, count of La Marche, who was legally entitled to a generous reparation from the English king, and John neglected to pay this. The Lusignans waited until 1201 and then declared war on him. John sent his officials into La Marche to administer it directly and the Lusignans appealed to Philip Augustus, accusing John of unfairly attacking and plundering them. John agreed to give the Lusignans a fair trial but then failed to do so, and in 1202 Philip summoned him to the royal court to answer for his misdeeds. John did not appear at the court, just as Henry II had ignored a similar summons in 1152, and it is probable that Philip and his barons judged that he should forfeit all his lands as a penalty. Philip was legally entitled to seize the fiefs of a rebellious vassal, and this John had become. The king decided, it seems, to take Normandy for himself and now to invest Arthur of Brittany, who had married his daughter Mary, with the other Plantagenet lands. And he was ready to fight John to back up his authority and dispossess him.

At first luck and ability favoured the English king. At the battle of Mirebeau he defeated and captured Arthur of Brittany and the Poitevin barons including Hugh of Lusignan. At this stage it looked as though Philip was going to have to fight long and hard. But John then rapidly put himself at a disadvantage. By high-handedness he alienated William of Les Roches, seneschal of Anjou since 1199. He made peace with the Lusignan camp and released them; but soon they turned against him. Furthermore, having captured Arthur at Mirebeau, John imprisoned him.

Arthur disappeared, almost certainly murdered by John in 1203: shocking rumours of his death at John's hands soon circulated widely, and both then and later this was to provide excellent propaganda for the French king.

John was gradually losing support through his indecisiveness and his capricious and brutal exactions, and having been deserted by many of his followers, he relied increasingly on destructive and much-hated mercenary troops. The personal interests and loyalties of the castellans of the eastern and southern marches of Normandy were under strain, and even in central Normandy John may have forfeited popular support in 1203 by the lawless behaviour of mercenaries stationed there.[40] By contrast Philip made shrewd and judicious grants of privileges to towns and monasteries in areas as he captured them, attracting the Norman nobility as his vassals and the church as an ally. The French king was helped too by the departure of the frequently hostile Baldwin of Flanders, a potential ally of John's, on the Fourth Crusade, along with several German princes. The nobility who stayed behind, including the duke of Burgundy and Renaud of Dammartin, count of Boulogne, tended to favour Philip. The field was at last clear for him to strike.

The French king now staged an impressive and successful military campaign against his rival,[41] who, at the end of 1203 fled abruptly to England. In March 1204, Château Gaillard fell to him: a key strategic and psychological moment. Philip then outmanoeuvred John's forces, executing a 'left hook' by way of Argentan, Falaise and Caen, and skirted Rouen, capital of Normandy. The Breton forces swept in through the Avranchin and Cotentin; and Rouen submitted to Philip in June 1204. William of Les Roches held Maine and Anjou on his behalf, and Brittany conceded to the French king in 1206. For a while Philip even contemplated the invasion of England, but this was beyond his capacity.

In 1205 the French king took and held Poitou as well, until in 1206 Aimery of Thouars, whom he had appointed seneschal, went over to John. Although he brought the Auvergne under royal suzerainty, Philip, after some attempts to reconquer Poitou, then left most of this county in English hands, together with the duchy of Aquitaine. Poitou was a valuable holding, and Louis VIII was again to overrun it in 1224. Aquitaine, known also as Gascony, was a less immediately appealing prospect, since the nobles here were unruly and difficult to dominate and the feudal, tenurial and administrative structures remained weak. In Brittany, however, Alice, daughter of Constance of Brittany, was declared countess by an assembly of Breton nobles and clergy in 1203. To secure her allegiance, in 1206 Philip arranged her marriage to Peter of Dreux (Mauclerc), great-grandson of Louis VI, who performed liege homage to him in 1213.

In the space of five years the balance of authority within France had been radically altered. By taking the richest and most-governed parts of the Plantagenet holdings Philip had cut direct communications between England and the remains of its French lands and had gained immense advantages for the French crown in land, wealth and manpower. The balance between the king and the princes had tipped dramatically towards the king – but Philip needed now to consolidate these advantages.

A new player now came increasingly onto the stage in the person of Prince Louis, the future Louis VIII. Although fearful for his life, banning him from engaging in his much-loved tournaments, Philip clearly distrusted his heir. He compelled Louis publicly to swear solemn oaths of allegiance and, unusually, did not knight him until he was 22 years old (in 1209). Themselves the parents of further male heirs, Louis and his wife Blanche of Castile appear however to have acted with far greater loyalty towards the king during their long wait for power than had the Plantagenet sons of Henry II towards him. Louis's military skills were to be of great value to his father, but he and Blanche would fall out with the king on occasions in pursuit of their own interests.[42]

Meanwhile events were moving fast in the empire, and the continuing struggle of the English and French kings became part of this wider conflict. In 1198 the Emperor Henry VI had died, leaving as his heir the infant Frederick II. A succession dispute erupted in Germany between Philip of Swabia, Henry VI's brother, and Otto of Brunswick, Henry the Lion's son and also the nephew of John of England. Alliances were made and broken rapidly in the next few years. At first, Pope Innocent III favoured Otto and excommunicated Philip of Swabia, who allied himself with Philip Augustus. Whilst Philip Augustus was over-running John's lands, Philip of Swabia made progress in Germany, and seemed about to carry the day, but the French king feared a strong German monarchy and changed sides, making a truce with Otto.

In 1208 Philip of Swabia was assassinated, leaving the field clear for Otto, and the French king now again turned against him as well and put forward his own candidate, Henry of Brabant. Both Innocent III and John were favourably disposed towards Otto for a time, but he soon thoroughly alienated the pope by invading Italy. By this stage Philip Augustus had become the pope's favourite, whilst both John and Otto were his excommunicate enemies. When in 1212 Innocent III put forward the fourth candidate, Frederick II, Philip was ready to support him. John remained the ally of Otto of Brunswick, and he also joined forces with Boulogne and Flanders, whose counts, Renaud of Dammartin and Ferrand of Portugal, were alarmed by French royal expansion. Philip stayed closely aligned with the pope. He gave refuge to Stephen Langton, John's exiled archbishop of Canterbury, whilst Pope Innocent III, who had selected Langton against John's wishes, laid England under an interdict (1208) and excommunicated John (1209).

Philip's projected invasion of England in 1213 had papal backing, but John, by submitting to the pope and making his kingdom a papal fief, replaced the French king as Innocent's favoured son, and the campaign was cancelled. The French king now turned against John's ally Flanders instead but, although by the spring of 1214 much damage had been done there, little concrete had been achieved. Philip's forces were pushed back, and he was left only with Douai and Cassel. The slight success in Flanders emboldened John, and leaving his allies Ferrand and Otto of Germany to tackle Philip Augustus from the north, he set off for Aquitaine, hoping to advance from the south-west with his army. In this campaign he showed considerable military skill, but on 2 July he was defeated by an equally adept

Prince Louis and a much smaller force who moved in from Chinon and fell on John's army at La Roche-au-Moine.

John fled rapidly to La Rochelle, putting up little further resistance apart from trying to consolidate his position in Poitou. An accomplished leader, Prince Louis rapidly brought Anjou under control, and effectively secured Philip's rear against the English king. The French king had now to face the count of Flanders and Otto of Brunswick, supported by the count of Boulogne and an English force, who were threatening to march on Paris from the north. The battle between them that took place at Bouvines on 27 July 1214 was the major and resounding victory which Philip needed, and achieved, to secure his massive territorial gains.[43]

Philip II 'Augustus', 1180–1223: after Bouvines, 1214–23

Bouvines was a vitally important moment – even the turning point – in the rise of the French monarchy and of critical importance in the politics of western Europe. Philip had consolidated his conquests of the Plantagenet lands and his territorial acquisitions in northern France; he had defeated the emperor and the English king, and he had established his own pre-eminence in France. His enemies had suffered a humiliating defeat. Put to flight by the French, Otto returned to Brunswick and died in 1218, leaving Germany to Frederick II Hohenstaufen. John, supported by the pope, made a truce with Philip and Louis, and returned to England.

The major ringleaders in France, Renaud of Boulogne and Ferrand of Portugal, count of Flanders, were captured. Ferrand was kept imprisoned in Paris, leaving Joan, his wife, to rule Flanders. Renaud's daughter was married to Philip Hurepel, Philip Augustus's second son, who was granted his fiefs; and Renaud too was kept in custody until his death in 1219. This was an important gain for the French royal house, and the king would consolidate it by seizing Ponthieu in 1221. But to other, lesser, rebellious French barons Philip was far more generous: Hervé of Donzi and Philip of Courtenai retained their lands.

At the end of 1215 there emerged the prospect of an even more spectacular gain for the Capetians: the crown of England for Prince Louis. A substantial number of the English nobility were infuriated and alienated by John's harsh financial demands, his lack of respect for the laws and customs of England, and his ever-encroaching administration. Unwilling to serve in France but angered by his defeat, they rose against him and eventually compelled him to agree to the major concessions embodied in Magna Carta. John showed no sign of adhering to its conditions, and Innocent III declared it null and void. Both John and his adversaries negotiated for the support of the French king, but John's barons had more to offer Prince Louis: the English throne.

Amongst the arguments put forward by the Capetian supporters of this move were that Louis had a claim to the English throne through his wife Blanche of Castile, granddaughter of Henry II of England; and that John had illegally surrendered his kingdom to the pope without the consent of his barons. Innocent III, unconvinced, excommunicated the barons, but Louis still invaded England in 1216.[44]

Although in turn excommunicated by the papal legate Guala, he won substantial support and respect for his personal and martial qualities, overrunning much of southern England and being welcomed by the citizens of London as a hero.[45] William the Breton declared that Philip opposed the expedition, and he clearly kept his distance from his heir's warmongering. Unwilling to alienate the pope any further, he made at least token moves to confiscate Louis's lands. On the other hand, he allowed Louis to gather together 12,000 knights for the expedition and he paid him a substantial sum of money.

In 1216 John died, leaving Henry III, a boy of nine, as his heir. This child-king was favoured by the English nobility in a way his father never had been, since John's death removed the major source of their discontent, and a minority government gave them the prospect of furthering their own ends. Innocent III's successor as pope, Honorius III, lent the young Henry considerable support. Louis appeared in an invidious light, for instead of opposing a detested king he was fighting a child, a papal protégé chosen as king by his own barons.

English support for Prince Louis now melted away. In defiance of Philip Augustus, Louis's wife Blanche of Castile raised a substantial force to relieve him; it was rumoured that she threatened her father-in-law to pawn her children to get her own way. But her troops were scattered by a storm in the Channel. Defeated at the battle of Lincoln, Louis was at first humiliated in having to seek absolution from the papal legate, but later came to honourable and financially advantageous terms in 1217 at Lambeth.[46] The French claims to England were thus relinquished, but the Capetian hold on most of the former holdings of the English kings in France was increasingly secure. The legal status of these lands was not however to be settled until 1259 (pp. 338–339).

Prince Louis soon found another outlet for his ambition in the Albigensian crusade. The intervention of the French monarchy in this complex and damaging war was to bring further gains to the French crown. The heretics and their followers remained strong and defiant in the face of war and persecution; and preaching campaigns, organised by the papacy and conducted by the Cistercians and the followers of Dominic, had failed to make any substantial impact. Raymond VI, count of Toulouse, seemed to support the heretics; many of his nobility certainly did so (pp. 187–188).

In 1208 Innocent III's legate, Peter of Castelnau, had been murdered, but Philip Augustus held aloof, for it was clear that a crusade against the count was not justified unless Raymond himself had been proved a heretic. Nevertheless, a great force of French nobles and clergy, many from the north, had descended on the Languedoc in 1209. They included the archbishops of Sens, Reims and Rouen, the duke of Burgundy and the counts of Saint-Pol and Nevers, all under the leadership of Simon de Montfort. This was the first time that a crusade had been called against heretics within western Christendom rather than non-believers outside its borders. After bloody and destructive campaigns against Raymond VI and Peter II of Aragon and Barcelona the invading army won an important victory in 1213 at the battle of Muret. At the Lateran council in 1215 Raymond VI was disinherited, and only a

small part of his lands was left for his son Raymond VII. Simon de Montfort became count of Toulouse, and Philip Augustus was now ready to receive his homage.

The king's attitude changed further in 1218 when Simon was killed at Toulouse and his young son Aimery was threatened by Raymond VI, the rival count of Toulouse and his son, who organised a rising in the Languedoc. Prince Louis had made a brief and inconclusive journey south in 1215, but now his father seems to have encouraged his closer involvement with the crusade, providing money and men. Louis remained in the Midi until 1219, but the success of the crusaders was limited. Raymond VI and Raymond VII, who had wide popular backing, offered considerable resistance, and by the time of Raymond VI's death in 1221 he and his son had almost driven the northern forces out of the Languedoc. Louis's intervention as king was, however, again to reverse events.

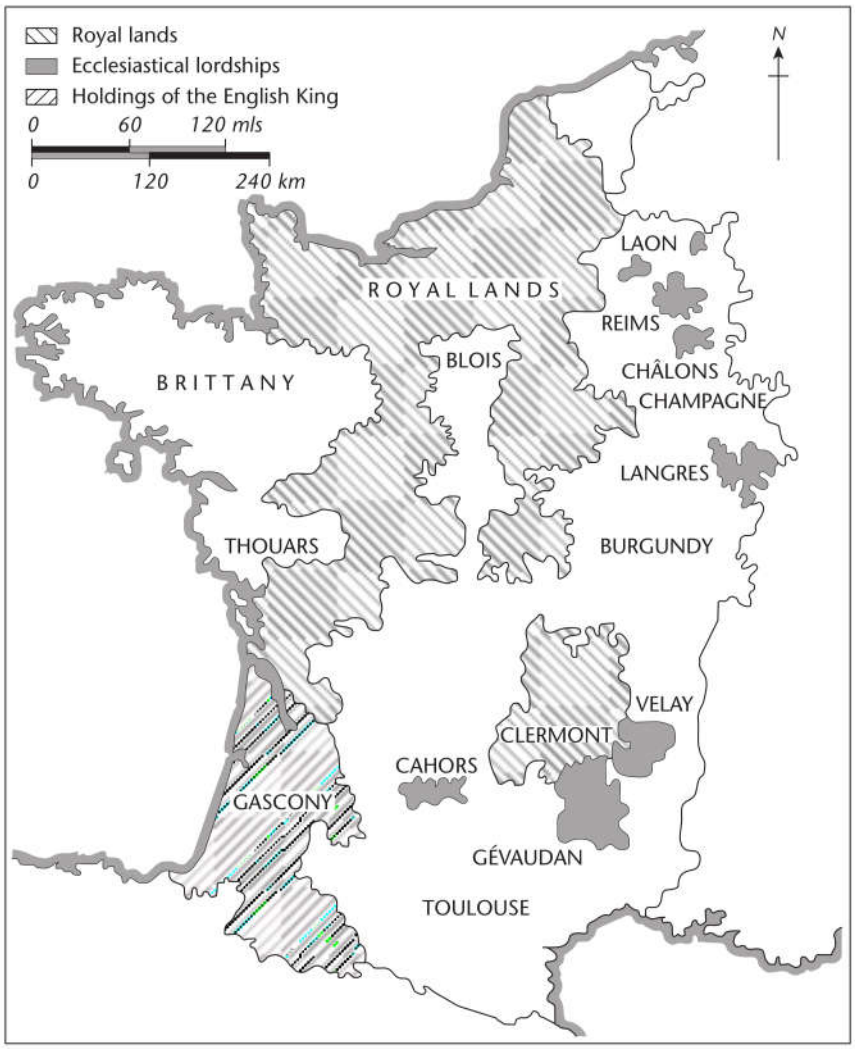
In 1222 Philip Augustus fell seriously ill, and in 1223 he died, it was said in a far more pious way than he had lived. His reign had seen spectacular changes in the fortune of the French monarchy. Although he had made considerable progress against Richard in the early 1190s, by 1199 he had suffered substantial reverses. Four years later he had triumphed utterly over the English king, and his great victory at Bouvines over the count of Flanders and the emperor gave him a pre-eminent position in France (Map 4.2) and in Europe. The extent of the opposition to his grandson Louis IX during his minority (1226–35) (pp. 255–259) can be seen in part at least as a backlash against the increase of royal power achieved by Philip.

Louis VIII, 1223–6

Immortalised by Nicholas of Brai as Louis 'the Lion', Louis VIII came to the throne in 1223 when well into his thirties, already a seasoned warrior and campaigner. He ruled only until 1226 but having already made a major contribution to strengthening royal power, in these three years he did much to build on his father's work and his own.[47]

Said to have been blond and handsome like his mother Isabella of Hainault, Louis was short in stature and suffered from recurrent ill-health. Although prone to occasional acts of great violence his reputation was almost saintlike. His disposition was described as kind, gentle and benevolent, but he commanded respect as a just ruler and through his notably chaste personal life. An ambitious, able and effective soldier, he was however too much engaged with the warrior's way of life ever to have qualified as suitable material for sainthood.

Yet Louis was also highly educated and a lover of the courtly arts and of learning, highly proficient in Latin: Rigord dedicated his *Deeds of Philip Augustus* to him, William the Breton his *Philippidos*. The Latin poet Giles of Paris wrote the *Karolinus* for him, a poem in which he was exhorted to follow the example of Charlemagne, for Louis was believed to be a descendant of the great emperor, not only through his father via Adela of Champagne but also through his mother Isabella of Hainault. Perhaps as an acknowledgement of the security of his lineage, Louis was the first Capetian king not to have been crowned during his father's lifetime.



MAP 4.2 The royal lands in 1223

In 1200 Louis had married Blanche of Castile, niece of King John, handpicked by Eleanor of Aquitaine, her grandmother. Highly intelligent, vivid, well-educated, pious, cultured and an effective consort and regent, she was to produce the requisite male heirs for Louis. Her prestige was greatly enhanced in 1212 with the victory of her father, King Alfonso VIII of Castile, over powerful Muslim Almohad forces at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. She was a wise choice.[48]

Despite his disagreements with Philip Augustus, Louis had taken an active part in the campaigns and politics in the later part of his father's reign, and there was a great continuity in interest and approach over the whole period from about 1210 until 1226. In 1224 the truce with England came to an end, and in line

with his father's plan, Louis determined to invade Poitou. Political and administrative structures in the region showed signs of weakening. The area around Poitiers was in general pro-French, but Niort and Saint-Jean-d'Angély by 1224 supported the English, whilst La Rochelle had done so continuously. Louis first made a treaty with the powerful Hugh of Lusignan, who had married King John's widow, Isabella of Angoulême, and who was count of La Marche and Angoulême, and who paid homage to him in return for substantial concessions. He also concluded truces with other nobles including Aimery, viscount of Thouars. With the support of many leading barons, including Theobald count of Champagne, the king arrived in the region with a substantial army.

Louis then moved into Poitou and subjugated Niort and Saint-Jean-d'Angély. With the blessing of a penitential procession through the streets of Paris led by Blanche of Castile, who was acting as regent, he took the great prize of the port of La Rochelle, buying the support of the nobles with pensions and that of the towns and the church with privileges. This approach was moderately successful in Poitou, but Louis then attempted to win over Gascony, sending in an army headed by Hugh of Lusignan. Hugh captured castles and towns as far south as the Garonne, but Bordeaux stood by the English king. Henry III's advisers built up a defensive force and rallied against him, trying both to reconquer Poitou and to negotiate at the same time.

Pope Honorius III lent them his support, and warned Louis that he too, like Otto of Brunswick, might fall from power. So Louis contented himself with his conquest of Poitou, and after consolidating his gains with further grants and privileges to the nobles and towns, returned to Paris. His gains were still substantial, and he gained the allegiance and support of Savary of Mauléon, seneschal of Poitou, who had defended La Rochelle against him. However, Hugh of Lusignan was moving back towards support of the English king, who was again to invade in 1230. Not until the reign of Louis IX, after his brother Alfonso became count, was Poitou to be fully subjugated.

The king now turned again to the Languedoc (p. 231); by 1226 he had gained full papal backing and the title of count of Toulouse, ceded to him by Aimery de Montfort. Louis gathered together an unusually large army – the English chronicler Roger of Wendover put their number at 50,000, though this is doubtless an exaggeration – and swept down into the Languedoc. Avignon, technically outside the borders of his kingdom, but a centre of resistance and a tempting prize, fell to him after a brutal siege. Despite the departure from the army of Theobald, count of Champagne, and Peter Mauclerc, count of Brittany, two nobles who were to cause great problems during Louis IX's minority, the rest of the south looked ready to submit with very little resistance.

Louis by now seemed almost invincible. He was careful to cultivate the communes and the church in the Midi, seeking to build support in the devastated and conquered region, and establishing royal administration on the basis of Simon de Montfort's arrangements made by the statutes of Pamiers in 1212. At another assembly in Pamiers in 1226 Louis laid down that all fiefs confiscated from heretics

belonged to the king. But Louis did not fully reduce the area to order, as he had contracted a serious illness and decided to leave for Paris. When he died on his way back, he left the Languedoc temporarily subjugated but not settled. Raymond VII was to pose Louis's widow, Blanche of Castile, regent for the young Louis IX, a significant challenge (pp. 257–258).

Philip Augustus and Louis VIII had captured an immense amount of land within their kingdom, and had made the French crown the one dominant power. They greatly enriched royal resources. Nevertheless, they thought it neither necessary nor desirable to keep all their conquests in the king's hands but, as did their contemporaries, they used some acquisitions to enrich members of the royal house. Philip Augustus had granted Brittany to Peter Mauclerc, grandson of Louis VI, and the county of Boulogne to his own son Philip Hurepel. Louis VIII's grants were on a larger scale still, rivalling only the presentation of Burgundy by Henry I to his brother in 1032, and they marked the beginning of the regular granting of apanages (pp. 401–402).

Thus through the terms of Louis VIII's will his eldest son Louis (IX) would take the crown of France. His second son, Robert, was to take the lands that Louis VIII had inherited from his mother, Isabella of Hainault; the third, John, was to be count of Anjou and Maine; the fourth, Alfonso, count of Poitou and lord of Auvergne. The next two sons, both destined for an ecclesiastical career, were not long-lived, but the seventh, Charles, was later to take John's place as count of Anjou. This left the new king, Louis IX, with the royal lands, Normandy, and lands and castles in the Languedoc and elsewhere in France. These, and his newly augmented powers of suzerainty, still left him very much the most powerful landholder in his kingdom.

When Louis VIII died, Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Poitou and the Languedoc could not yet be held firmly and freely by the Capetians. But compared with the position of the French kings in France in the reigns of Louis VI and Louis VII, Louis VIII's powers showed vast gains. By a mixture of marriage, the exploitation of feudal law, and force, Philip Augustus and his son had delivered the French throne from the Plantagenet threat and brought it into a dominant position in the kingdom. This was a remarkable achievement.

French society, 1108–1226

Social and economic changes

The revival of Capetian power took place in a period of economic expansion and social change, and the kings were able to profit considerably from many of the developments that took place. Bloch, and with him many other historians, characterised the period 1050–1250 as the 'second feudal age', a time when an economic revolution took place. The changes that this brought with it 'affected in their turn, from the twelfth century onwards, the whole fabric of human relations'.[49] How can such changes be measured? Some of the sources for this period give us

much valuable information about rural life. The abbey of Cluny, for example, has, like many other religious houses, left us with a magnificent cartulary (a register of documents), providing rich information about land, fairs and markets, tolls and mills. Another important source is Abbot Suger's treatise about his administration of the abbey of Saint-Denis and its estates.

Yet in the majority of cases the basic source material is charters, useful in many ways but limited by their nature and not suitable for statistical purposes. Much of our evidence must be sought on the land itself, in traces of new settlements and land clearance, in the appearance of new villages. Place names give some indication of this trend, for many of the settlements called *Villeneuve* date from this period. To reach the level of the individual peasant is more difficult still. Some idea of rural life emerges from the pages of illuminated manuscripts, the carved capitals of churches and from archaeological finds, but the agricultural labourer and his family do not. But overall patterns emerge from these sources.

In some areas of France, a quickening in economic life can be discerned from the middle of the tenth century, which became widespread in the second half of the eleventh century and the whole of the twelfth (pp. 10–11). Villages and monastic communities expanded; long-distance trade grew as the demand for luxury goods gradually increased; and local markets multiplied, and coinage circulated more widely in much of France as services were gradually replaced by wages. Patterns of landholding and farming changed as serfs as a group declined in numbers and parts of the lords' domain lands were frequently split into peasant holdings and then divided between heirs.

One driver of the changes was probably improved climatic conditions, bringing drier and warmer weather and increasing agricultural production. Another was the steadily increasing demand from growing towns and the wealthy nobility, which stimulated production; a third was the growing population, which brought about pressure on uncleared land. Cereal cultivation in particular was expanded, barley and rye giving way to wheat in many areas. To increase crop yields, farmers increasingly made use of improvements in ploughing techniques. Heavy ploughs, reinforced with iron, replaced the lighter ones, and oxen gave way to horses as draught animals.

This change was gradual, but by the later years of the twelfth century in the Île-de-France and Picardy, the wealthiest regions of France, horse-drawn ploughs were probably quite widespread. The heavier and stronger horse produced more work than the ox; it was also more expensive, and its arrival tended to widen the gap between the rich peasants and their poorer counterparts. But more food was available to feed the growing population, and surpluses could be sold, stimulating the growth of rural trade and provisioning the growing urban population as well.

The pressures of an expanding population and the stimulus of better agricultural techniques caused land to be cleared and reclaimed from the forests for farming. Colonisers were encouraged to settle by landlords, many of whom stood to profit from such ventures. From the later eleventh century new settlements, villages and religious communities began to appear in clearings hacked from the forests.

New patterns of peasant landholding emerged, the newly reclaimed land being let out for rent or for a fixed proportion of the produce (the *champart*). Some rural communities were granted franchises and privileges or even, in some cases, a commune (pp. 210–213) that gave the peasants a considerably improved status. The changes of the twelfth century seem thus to have benefited many of the peasants, bringing better economic conditions and an improved social standing.

The powers of the lords over the peasants were considerable, involving rights of justice and the ability to levy taxes, tallage and tolls, which tapped the income of the more prosperous villagers. Such villagers were understandably keen to negotiate with their lords to establish a commune or to purchase a franchise, limiting the lords' powers in exchange for considerable sums of money. Many lords clearly also made considerable profits from their domains by selling surplus produce.

There were also changes in the way in which their lands were worked, as in northern France the often heavy labour services of the peasants began to be commuted in return for rents. This provided the lord with money to hire casual day labourers, although often the peasants were still obliged to provide the ploughs and draught animals to perform the work. Nevertheless, those families paying fixed rents in lieu of services did well during the course of the twelfth century as inflation reduced the value of their rents, and the lords suffered proportionately. By 1100 many of the major landowners were running into debt as a result of conspicuous expenditure. By 1200 the same problems were affecting numerous minor bannal lords.

The great profits made from land from the middle of the eleventh century encouraged conspicuous expenditure. For the nobility, long-distance pilgrimages and crusades, the foundation of religious houses, lavish almsgiving, expensive clothing and entertaining on an extravagant scale all became expected. But as Duby showed, chivalry prompted characteristic forms of behaviour for the 'perfect man' with regard to wealth: not to produce but to destroy, to live in lordly fashion from the ownership of land and authority over people, and to spend on entertainment without thought for the cost.[50] The result was an ever-increasing burden of debt.

The same was true for the great religious communities, which lavished immense sums on large new churches, on almsgiving, on a vast body of servants to care for their members, but many of which failed to administer their lands efficiently, often farming them out to unscrupulous agents who took much of the profits. In the mid-twelfth century Abbot Peter the Venerable of Cluny attempted to remedy such problems, which were exacerbated by the falling-off of offerings from the faithful, previously a vitally important source of income for his abbey. But he was unable to do so, and had to resort to borrowing money from Jewish and Christian merchants and even to pawning jewels and plate.

Urban communities were becoming increasingly significant in the twelfth century, their tradesmen, merchants and craftsmen all aware of the importance of profit and living from the rewards of flourishing trade, both local and long-distance. By the end of the twelfth century they seem, indeed, to have rivalled the countryside in economic vitality and importance.

From about 1180 agricultural improvements showed maximum impact, with cereal cultivation reaching a peak and mills for grinding corn and heavy ploughs becoming widespread. Corn began to rise in price, exchange built up and there was an economic boom. Towns expanded rapidly, and many of the greater nobles, the princes and the king began to exploit their lands directly and to manage them more effectively, applying urban techniques of trading to rural estate management and encouraging commerce, the growth of towns and the passage of merchants through their lands. The crown and the leading princes such as the counts of Flanders and Champagne were able to tap the wealth of the towns, giving them a great financial advantage over the nobles in their lands and supporting political centralisation. Those middling and lesser bannal lords who were unable and unwilling to adapt to the new economic realities would in contrast suffer considerably (pp. 283–284).

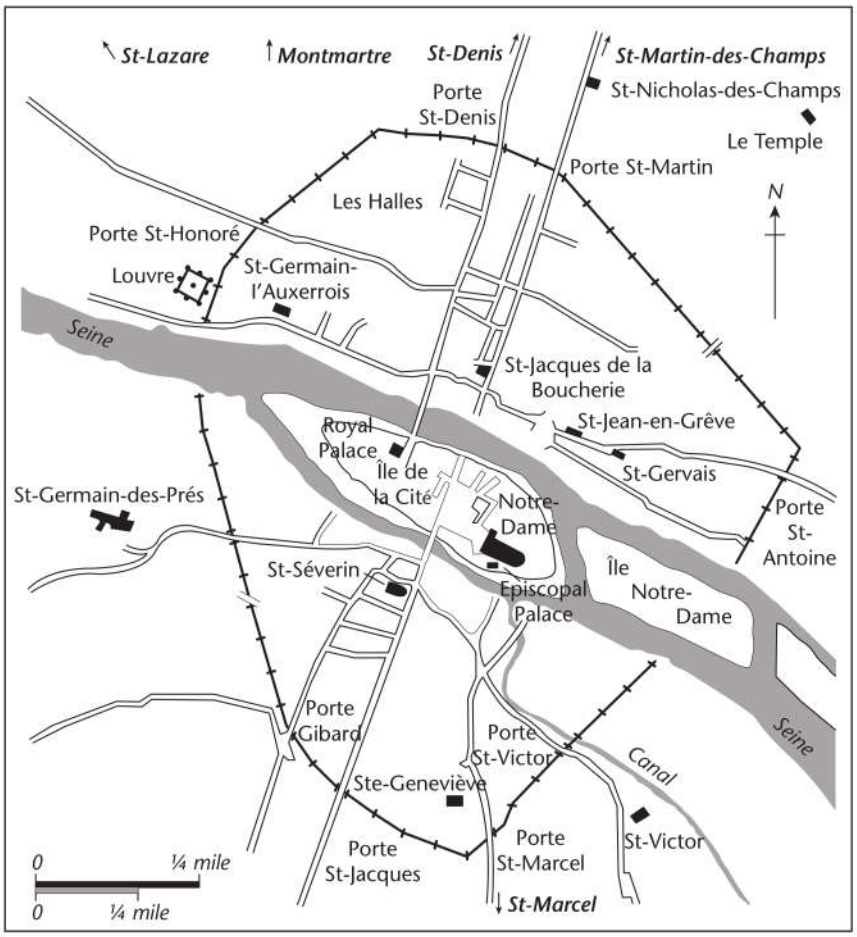
The growth of Paris

In the years 1108–1226 Paris underwent remarkable growth and expansion.[51] When Louis VI's reign began, the king's authority in the city was uncertain. In 1111 Robert count of Meulan could pillage the royal palace on the *Ile de la Cité* unopposed, at the same time destroying its bridges and cutting off Louis's access to it. By 1226, Paris was defended by the great royal fortress of the Louvre and surrounded by strong ramparts. Indisputably the leading city of France, with perhaps some 50,000 inhabitants, it had outstripped in size and prosperity all its rivals in the northern part of the kingdom.

The process began in earnest under Louis VI and Louis VII. At its heart the *Île de la Cité*, previously semi-rural in aspect, was built over. The cathedral of Notre-Dame acquired an increasing importance as a royal church, the burial-place of queens and royal children and a meeting-place for the king's assemblies. From about 1150 work began to embellish the Romanesque cathedral, including the creation of a tympanum, highly symbolic, depicting the virgin Mary with a king and a bishop attending her in prayer.

In 1163 a complete rebuilding of Notre-Dame cathedral was begun under the auspices of Bishop Maurice of Sully, with major donations from the ecclesiastics, the laity and the crown. The burgeoning population of Paris doubtless required a space far greater than the old Romanesque cathedral, and pilgrims were increasingly seeking out the relics of the Blessed Virgin and other saints, yet the bishop must also have been motivated by a sense of rivalry with his ecclesiastical peers.

In the locality were the striking new buildings at Saint-Denis, Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Saint-Victor, and many of the great cathedrals in northern France, such as Laon and Sens, were being rebuilt at this time, all in the French style (*opus francigenum*, known today as Gothic).[52] But contemporaries were confounded and amazed by the unprecedented scale of the new cathedral in Paris. At more than 120 metres long, its massive vaults standing at 35 metres high and supported probably



MAP 4.3 Paris in the reign of Philip Augustus

by flying buttresses, and with its huge flanking towers, the great church seemed to evoke the great buildings of antiquity but in a style of the greatest delicacy and refinement.

A great road and an open space for the works were cleared to its west, creating a main route through Paris. This area, which would be used for royal processions and a fair, hugely enhanced – and still enhances – the impact of the cathedral. Wholly out of scale with the needs of the diocese, but achievable because of the availability of funding from wealthy patrons and the people of Paris, Notre-Dame was a monument intended to embody the power and greatness of the city, the church, and the king.[53]

The rebuilding programme started with the choir at the east end, substantially completed by *c.*1182, followed over the next two decades by the nave. In its turn

hugely influential, Notre-Dame was a masterpiece of architecture and art. Its design enhanced its flourishing celebration of saints and their relics, reflected in developments in its liturgical life. In the early thirteenth century Léonin and Pérotin – its first choirmasters to be known by name – would ensure its place as a noted centre of polyphonic musical composition.

The west front was constructed and adorned in stages during the first half of the thirteenth century. The powerful iconography of its lower ranges, finished by *c.*1220, reflects the views of contemporary theologians about the Last Judgement. The impressive central portal, the triumphal entrance for the king and queen, features this in sculptures of intense and vivid imagery. It is flanked by two further great portals, the one to the north depicting the virgin Mary with the saints of Paris, and the other to the south (the portal of Saint Anne) featuring scenes from Christ's childhood. Much of the latter is composed of the mid-twelfth-century Romanesque sculptures re-set in a new context.

Above these stood a row of 28 kings standing three metres high, almost certainly Old Testament kings, who were regarded as models and inspirations for the rulers of the day (Image 7.1, p. 436). Their identification with French kings, linking the Capetians with their Merovingian and Carolingian predecessors, originated by the end of the thirteenth century and made them the unfortunate targets of revolutionary fervour in 1789.[54]

To the south of the cathedral lay the episcopal palace, which was also completely rebuilt. Its great hall hosted ecclesiastical assemblies and major political events such as, in 1179, an assembly prior to the crowning of Philip Augustus as Louis VII's heir at Reims. At the other end of the island lay the royal palace, the *Palais Royale*, also extended in this period: Louis VI built a major stone tower and he and Louis VII reconstructed the royal apartments. A considerable number of churches and chapels were situated in the vicinity, many of them of twelfth-century foundation, and a small and often-persecuted Jewish community, with a synagogue, grew up at the centre of the island.

On the right bank the bourgs of Saint-Gervais and Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois were expanding, as was the Grève area, reflecting a growing commercial life. The merchant corporation of the *marchands de l'eau* was increasingly significant and profited from royal patronage. In 1170 Louis VII confirmed the customs they had enjoyed in his own and his father's reigns. There were other trade guilds too, for butchers, fishmongers and bakers, and shops and money changers began to proliferate.

To cater for the spiritual need of this growing population parish churches were founded in considerable numbers, an example being Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, a chapel belonging to Saint-Martin-des-Champs, which was rebuilt and given parochial status probably in the middle of the twelfth century. A substantial proportion of the parish churches of central Paris, indeed, date from this period. Beyond the bourgs of Saint-Gervais and Saint-Martin-l'Auxerrois other peripheral settlements grew up around the religious houses of Saint-Martin-des-Champs and the Temple.

Similarly, on the left bank of the Seine, the bourgs of Saint-Marcel and of Saint-Germain-des-Prés expanded: the latter was an independent lordship, later bisected by the city walls. Here too was Sainte-Geneviève, an ancient royal monastery in a commanding position above the river and whose patron saint was believed to protect Paris against flooding. In 1147 the community's involvement in a scandalous brawl during a papal visit enabled Abbot Suger to bring it into the Augustinian congregation.

The growth of the left bank did not depend on commerce alone. This was the centre of the schools of Notre-Dame. Masters such as William of Champeaux, Peter Lombard, Peter Abelard, Robert of Melun and William of Conches attracted students in large numbers, swelling the population of the area. Around Paris, too, more outlying settlements such as Saint-Lazare and Montmartre were showing signs of vigour. So too were the bourgs of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés and Saint-Denis, the latter stimulated by the profits of the fair of Lendit.

Under Philip Augustus Paris began to show signs of becoming a large urban conglomeration rather than the series of settlements it had been before, and much of this it owed to the king himself. Building on the work of his predecessors, he showed a considerable and sustained interest in the commercial life of the city and the development of trade. The Champeaux, later Les Halles, became a significant hub for markets which were transferred to this site from elsewhere in Paris. In 1181 the fair of Saint-Lazare was brought here; in 1182 houses belonging to Jews in the district were demolished to make more room for the site; and in 1183 the king ordered a covered market to be constructed here, which rapidly became an important commercial centre. At around the same time he provided a public drinking fountain to serve the area.

The trade guild of the *marchands de l'eau* profited greatly from its royal protection, now becoming the virtual monopolist of river traffic on the Seine and levying heavy tolls. Philip Augustus regulated the sale of wine and salt, and after his conquest of Normandy confirmed a trading agreement drawn up between the merchants of Rouen and Paris. In 1214 the king permitted dues to be exacted from boats carrying certain produce, including wine, salt and grain, to pay for extending port facilities in Paris. These were located on the right bank at the *port de Grève*.

The Parisian burgesses began to play a significant role in royal administration; in 1190 when the king went on crusade they were given financial responsibilities and were involved in the council of regency. This suggests that they may also have been involved to a degree in governing the city itself, although the king did not grant them communal status: his *prévôt* acted as his representative in the city. Paris began also to emerge as the administrative capital of the realm. At his palace on the *Ile de la Cité*, his principal residence, Philip built a new archive to keep safe his charters, and his accounting bureau was cited at the Temple.

As in Roman times, the bridges of Paris formed the vital arteries of the city. The *Grand Pont* was constructed with timber mounted on stone piles; the *Petit Pont* with timber alone. Lacking resilience, they were prone to be damaged or washed away by the periodic inundations of the city by the river Seine. The *Petit Pont* was

severely damaged in 1196 and again in 1206 when the offices of Saint Geneviève were invoked to save the city, with a grand procession of her relics. Below these bridges were watermills, and despite the risks, on them were built dwellings and chapels. The *Grand Pont* carried houses and shops for jewellers and moneychangers; the *Petit Pont* was frequented by the students and masters from the schools.[55]

Bridges were critical for defence as well as commerce: the *Châtelet* fort safeguarded the right bank end of the *Grand Pont* and became the seat of justice as well as a prison. The *Petit Châtelet*, on the left bank, was developed during the twelfth century to defend the *Petit Pont* and was reconstructed by Philip Augustus.

In 1185 Philip, who was said to have been disgusted by the filth on the streets of Paris, decided to have the main roads and squares paved. Then in 1189–90 he began construction of a substantial wall around the north side of the expanded city, funded partly by the citizens. The ramparts surrounding the right bank were followed by fortifications to protect the left bank, completed by 1211. William the Breton commented that this set off a building boom in the city, with fields and vineyards giving way to houses.[56]

The Roman walls encircling the *Île de la Cité* had enclosed only 25 acres, whilst Philip's walls contained 625, with more than 70 towers along their length, and 14 great gates. Paris was now the largest walled city in the kingdom of France. A few towers and sections of the walls – the longest section bordering the lyceé Charlemagne in the 4th *arrondisement* – are still there to be discovered.

Between 1190 and 1202, the king also had the Louvre castle constructed, just outside the walls. An innovative and powerful rectangular fortification with a great tower at the centre, seemingly impregnable, it dominated the city of Paris and commanded the roads to Clichy and Chaillot. Its lower levels survive beneath the Louvre museum and are still an impressive sight (Image 4.4). All these developments bolstered the city's defences, physical and psychological, greatly increasing its security against the Plantagenet threat.

In the reign of Philip Augustus the university of Paris emerged from the schools (pp. 189–190). Gradually the teachers and students formed into corporations or guilds that were to form the basis of the institution. It had built up a considerable reputation from about 1100, long before it was fully organised. The first college, the *Dix-Huit*, was founded in 1180, and in 1205 Baldwin of Flanders, Latin emperor of Constantinople, begged Innocent III to persuade the masters and scholars of Paris to go to his lands and reform the study of letters there. Although Pope Innocent III wrote to the 'university' in 1205, and William the Breton used the terms 'university' and 'faculty' in about 1212, these did not appear in an official record until 1221 when the faculties of theology, law, arts and medicine were constituted. At the same time the university was given its own seal.

The rapid increase of masters and scholars brought difficulties with it. In the 1190s Stephen of Tournai wrote to the pope complaining that 'the study of sacred letters amongst us are fallen into the workshop of confusion, whilst disciples applaud novelty alone and masters watch out for glory rather than learning'.[57] In 1200 there was a violent riot when a group of German students fought the troops

IMAGE 4.4 Philip Augustus's fortifications at the Louvre, 1190–1202

Photo © E. Hallam

of the *prévôt* of Paris; several students died, and the masters called on the king for redress, threatening to withdraw from the city.

Philip flung the *prévôt* and his associates into prison and ruled that from henceforth the students were to be subject only to ecclesiastical justice (there was a logic to this since the students were clerks in minor orders). Anyone infringing their privileges would be tried by the court of the new *prévôt*, and the burgesses of Paris were enjoined to respect and protect the scholars. This generous grant did little to restore the university to order, however, for disturbances continued well into the thirteenth century (p. 259).

Orthodox and heretical religious movements

The turmoil and ferment of late eleventh- and twelfth-century French society contained within it a strong tide of monastic reform, which brought with it many new orders.[58] The church reforms and the new learning encouraged a searching for fundamentals, a return to the apostolic life of the Bible and the early church, or to the Rule of Saint Benedict unadorned with later customs (p. 122). Hermits fled from the world to deserted places in forests and mountains and, imitating the desert fathers, lived singly or in groups. Some in their enthusiasm

strayed over the borders of orthodoxy into heresy, but all were seeking to return to what they saw as the original precepts of the religious life.

By about 1100 the great Benedictine monasteries appeared to many critics, both internal and external, to have become too closely bound by their elaborate liturgical rounds to concentrate fully on their spiritual life; and despite their emphasis on running their great estates, another source of distraction, many were noticeably and heavily in debt. Originating in groups of hermits living in deserted places, most notably Colan in Burgundy and Craon on the Maine-Brittany borders, the new orders sought to avoid such traps of worldly splendour and an over-elaborate routine.

An offshoot of Colan, the abbey of Molesme attracted a number of celebrated men anxious to escape from the world, including Bruno of Reims, who later founded the Carthusian order, and Alberic and Stephen Harding, who became the leaders of the monastery at Cîteaux. Here a small group of monks followed the aims of poverty, seclusion and the observance of Saint Benedict's Rule to the letter. Manual labour became an important part of the daily round, and contact with laymen, including patrons and benefactors, was kept to a minimum.

In all likelihood the establishment at Cîteaux would have remained small and obscure had not the future Bernard of Clairvaux arrived with a group of companions in 1112 or 1113. His ability and enthusiasm were largely responsible for the spread of the Cistercian ideal and the remarkable expansion of the order: in 1118 there were seven abbeys, amongst them Clairvaux, where Bernard himself was the first abbot; in 1152 there were 328 abbeys; and by 1200 there were 525, many outside France. Men from many different walks of life, some of great eminence, were attracted to Cistercian communities that offered plain living and high thinking, a disciplined, ascetic and isolated existence far from the society for which they were interceding.

The Cistercians rejected all luxury and wealth, insisting on the utmost simplicity in food, dress and in their surroundings. Their early churches and buildings were stark and unadorned. As endowments they would accept only large tracts of land, preferably uncultivated, and finance only for building the monastery. They relied on lay brothers or *conversi*, drawn from the uneducated peasantry, to carry out most of the agricultural labour necessary to sustain each community. On principle, they refused the churches, tithes, manorial dues and rights that formed an important part of the Benedictine income.

Bernard of Clairvaux, as the prophet and populariser of the order, came to hold a central role in the religious life of both France and western Europe. He preached the Second Crusade; he disputed with and befriended eminent scholars such as Peter Abelard and with Benedictine abbots such as Suger and Peter the Venerable of Cluny; he intervened in episcopal elections against Louis VI of France and other rulers. There was a Cistercian pope, Eugenius III, and a great number of secular patrons of the order, including the French king and many of the princes, who were able and willing to provide the large tracts of land and buildings demanded by the order for new monasteries.

Paradoxically many Cistercian abbeys became very wealthy by the end of the twelfth century, provoking considerable criticism from contemporaries such as Walter Map. Some of the precepts of the order were beginning to be relaxed by this time. At Pontigny a fine and elaborate *chevet* or apse was built at the east end of the church, though it was little ornamented; at the royal house of Barbeaux Louis VII was interred in the church in an elaborate and magnificent tomb. Soon the Cistercians were to accept parish churches, tithes and manorial dues in moderation. Nevertheless, despite some amelioration of the harshness of the Cistercian way of life, the order was to retain its general characteristics of austerity, discipline and isolation throughout the Middle Ages.

The Augustinian canons (pp. 130–131) broke away from the Benedictine framework altogether, and their establishments were adaptable and flexible.[59] Like monks, they laid considerable stress on interceding for society, but they had a closer involvement with that society as well. They acted as parish priests, they cared for the sick – hospitals staffed by Augustinian canons were increasingly popular during the twelfth century – and they studied and taught. This adaptability made them popular with lay patrons, especially the lesser nobility and townsfolk who could not afford to endow a major Cistercian house.

Under the general umbrella of the Augustinian rule a number of congregations formed. One, the Victorines, was centred on Saint-Victor and had the support of the French kings and a considerable reputation for learning. Another, the Premonstratensians, was dependent on the house of Prémontré, founded in 1120 by Norbert of Xanten, a friend of Bernard of Clairvaux, on the encouragement of Pope Calixtus II. Except that they began as a mixed order, admitting women as well as men, the Premonstratensians were a halfway house between the Augustinians and the Cistercians. Theirs was a harsh rule with a considerable emphasis on manual labour, but they were also encouraged to do pastoral work and to preach. By 1150 the White Canons, as they were known, had become a very prestigious order.

The Carthusians were hermits living in community, their needs looked after by lay brothers, their way of life exceedingly harsh. Inhabiting cells around a cloister, they were sustained by a pottage of vegetables and bread, and wore hair shirts. But learning was an important part of their way of life: said Guibert of Nogent 'although they subject themselves to every kind of poverty, they have accumulated a very valuable library'.[60] Its popularity limited by extreme asceticism, this was an order that adhered to its ideals throughout the Middle Ages. The same cannot be said for the religious houses dependent on Grandmont, founded by Stephen of Muret on a bare hillside near Limoges in about 1110. So extreme was the way of life initially adopted by these monks – rejecting not only tithes and churches but also all livestock except for bees – that within half a century they had to modify their customs to keep their communities together. But the heroic reputation of the Grandmontines brought them much lay support: both the English and the French kings were major patrons of the order (Source 4.3).[61]

SOURCE 4.3 DOUBLE-ARMED LIMOGES RELIQUARY CROSS, C.1180

This magnificent reliquary cross, today at the Cloisters Museum in New York, was created in about 1180. With a wooden core, it is lavishly adorned with rock crystal and more than 60 coloured glass cabochons set in a silver gilt casing. Although its workmanship is characteristic of the Limoges area, its double-armed form mimics Byzantine reliquaries. It contains tiny fragments

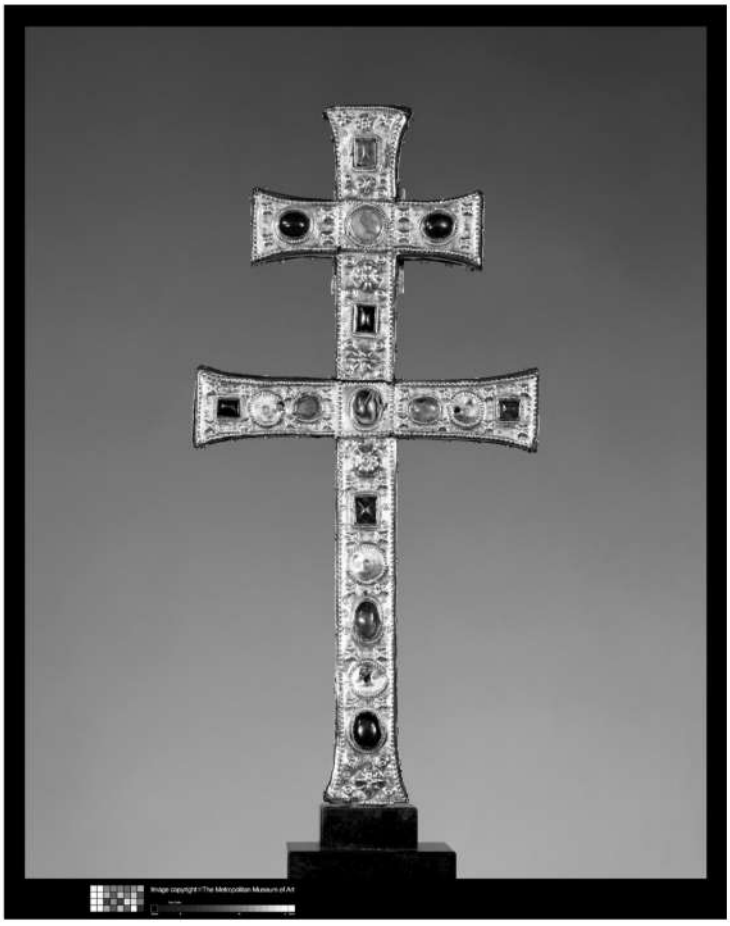


IMAGE 4.5 Double-armed Limoges reliquary cross, *c.*1180

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art © 2018. Image copyright the Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource/Scala, Florence

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of relics from holy sites in Palestine, including one deemed to be of the True Cross, and of early deacons and martyrs of the church, all identified by inscriptions. Strongly associated with the treasures of the abbey of Grandmont, its high status and the high quality of its workmanship make an interesting contrast with the unusually austere way of life of this strict monastic order, while reflecting also its connections with many royal and aristocratic patrons.[62]

Apart from the Augustinians, most of these communities fled from society in order the better to intercede for it. But in the wake of the crusades and the growth of the cult of chivalry, two orders appeared that were dedicated to fighting the infidel – the Templars and the Hospitallers. They became the crack fighting troops of the crusading armies, living under a severe quasi-monastic discipline, and spread widely in France during the twelfth century.

The Templars were founded in Jerusalem in 1118 to provide disciplined, effective troops, first to guard pilgrims, and later for the crusading armies. Ten years later they adopted many Cistercian customs. The knights, fighting monks who were lay brothers but from aristocratic backgrounds, took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The small houses where they lived when not on campaign were served by priests and domestics. The Knights Hospitaller emerged in the Holy Land in the early twelfth century, to care for the poor and sick and again to protect pilgrims. Initially very similar to the Augustinian canons in their way of life, they subsequently adopted many features of the Templars' organisation and became increasingly orientated towards warfare. By 1200 both orders had amassed considerable wealth, and the Templars acted as bankers to both the French and the English kings.

A different kind of community was created by Robert of Arbrissel at the end of the eleventh century at Fontevraud – a monastery for lay brothers and priests who ministered to a group of Benedictine nuns. By the middle of the twelfth century it had become a wealthy, select and aristocratic community living under an ascetic rule, with a number of daughter houses. The mother house of Fontevraud received valuable patronage from Eleanor of Aquitaine, and following the interment of Henry II here in 1189, and Richard I in 1199, became the Plantagenet burial-house, Eleanor commissioning a set of magnificent tomb effigies here for her sons and for herself (Source 4.4).[63]

SOURCE 4.4 TOMB OF ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE AT FONTEVRAUD ABBEY, C. 1203

Founded by a charismatic preacher around 1100, the abbey of Fontevraud in the Loire valley became the Plantagenet necropolis by accident, not design. King Henry II had planned to be buried at Grandmont in the Limousin, but his unexpected death from war injuries at Chinon at the height of summer in

1189 meant that a hasty burial was necessary, and Fontevraud, only a dozen miles away, was the most convenient spot. Later his widow, the former queen of France Eleanor of Aquitaine, retired there, and it was she who arranged for the splendid effigies of Henry II and their son Richard Lionheart, also buried there, to be made. Hers joined them after her death in 1203. It depicts the queen alive, awake but rapt in contemplation, holding not a symbol of office but an open book – the first of this kind of effigy in medieval Europe.

IMAGE 4.6 Tomb of Eleanor of Aquitaine at Fontevraud Abbey, *c.* 1203

Photo © C. West

The enthusiasm for renewed monasticism, as epitomised by Fontevraud, affected the female population just as much as the male. From a very low level after the barbarian invasions and the collapse of the Carolingian empire, there was a steady increase in the number of nunneries in France during the eleventh century. Although women were not included in the then dominant Cluniac order, the abbots of Cluny, as well as the Capetian kings, were sympathetic towards female monasticism. The number of nunneries in France, especially in the north and west, grew dramatically in the period from about 1080 to 1170.[64] Amongst them were single or small groups of nunneries such as the abbey of the Paraclete, founded for Heloise by Peter Abelard, and the congregations of Foissy in Champagne and Doullens in Ponthieu.

In addition, both of the two most successful monastic orders of twelfth-century France, Cistercian and Premonstratensian, accepted women members, albeit in an enclosed and subordinate role. Having at first seen them as essential, the Premonstratensians however formally excluded women during the course of the twelfth century. By contrast the Cistercians, having initially banned female members,

in 1191 formally accepted the existence of nunneries belonging to the order, while at the same time regulating them very strictly.[65] The options for women in religion narrowed at the end of the twelfth century, but then, early in the thirteenth, new and wider opportunities arose with the *béguines* and minoresses (p. 289).

The church thus accepted and supported a great variety of religious orders, following many different customs. It was not, however, prepared to accept heretical religious movements, whose adherents it sought to make outcasts from society, and ultimately crush. Doctrine – as expressed a little later by Saint Thomas Aquinas, for example – was unambiguous on this matter:

> heresy is a sin which merits not only excommunication but also death, for it is worse to corrupt the faith which is the life of the soul than to issue counterfeit coins which minister to the secular life. Since counterfeiters are justly killed by princes as enemies to the common good, so heretics also deserve the same punishment.[66]

The penalties meted out to heretics were consequently often extreme and savage.

In the early eleventh century isolated groups of heretics had been identified in France, especially in the decade between 1018 and 1028. A group at Orléans, for example, had denied Christ's human form and the validity of the sacraments, penance and marriage, and Robert the Pious had intervened to crush it in 1022. The council of Charroux in 1028 had condemned heresy and in the later part of the century the sources are silent on it. In the twelfth century, however, it began to revive again in France as a number of heretical sects were discovered.

Some began very much like their orthodox counterparts, groups of hermits and wandering preachers who espoused poverty and reacted against the wealth of the church and a burgeoning economic life in the towns. Henry the Monk (or Henry of Lausanne), an apostate from the religious life, began his career as a wild radical preacher whose extreme anticlericalism in the end brought him into heresy. He rejected the functions of the priesthood altogether, he denied original sin and prayers for the dead.[67] His ideal of a poor wandering clergy with no sacramental functions but a preaching role he spread across northern France, in Aquitaine and Toulouse, and it was in the rich lands of the Midi that he met Peter of Bruis, another itinerant heretical preacher, after 1135.

Peter had begun his career as a parish priest in the Hautes-Alpes region but had rejected the authority of the Old Testament, the fathers and the traditions of the church, denying the validity of the mass and baptism of infants. He and his followers in the Alps and the Midi saw the church as a 'spiritual unity of the congregation of the faithful',[68] but at times they put forward their views through violent demonstrations. They forced monks out of their cloisters and compelled them to marry, they ate meat on fast days, they burned crucifixes. Peter met his end at Saint-Gilles when he was thrown on his own bonfire by his opponents, but not before he had had a long and effective career as a preacher. He founded a sect known as the Petrobrusians, against whom Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, wrote a powerful tract.

Peter of Bruis and Henry the Monk were the two most celebrated French heretical preachers of the earlier twelfth century, but there were others too. For example, at Bucy-le-Long, not far from Soissons, two peasants who were eventually to be brutally lynched by a mob, began in about 1114 to preach a heresy akin to Bogomilism. This was a dualist belief that had originated in Bulgaria in the early tenth century, and was founded on the belief that rather than one God there were two beings: God, who had power in the future but none in the world; and Satan, who had created the visible world and held sway over it.

A monastic letter writer from Périgord writing probably in the 1160s announced the existence of heretics in this area who followed the apostolic life, ate no meat and refused to bow before the cross. By the middle of the twelfth century, with the growth of lay piety and spirituality and the formation of religious confraternities right across western Europe, such heretical ideas, and many others, were perceived as increasingly widespread. Such heretical groups, spreading through the Rhineland, France and northern Italy, were viewed by the Catholic hierarchy with increasing alarm: a many-headed hydra which threatened the church. They were described by the Third Lateran Council of 1179 as 'the loathsome heresy of those known to some as the Cathars, others the Patarenes and others the Publicani'.

In 1184, through the papal bull *ad abolendam*, Pope Lucius III set up the mechanism for eradicating this scourge of Christendom. Both heretics and their supporters faced immediate excommunication, and bishops who lacked zeal in crushing heresy would be suspended from office. The secular authorities must cooperate in the extirpation of heresy and communities supporting heretics would have their trading privileges restricted. To seek out evidence, the inquisition was constituted in the form of regular visitations to each community where heresy was suspected by a bishop or his representatives. Major preaching campaigns were to be mounted by the Cistercians.

In the French Languedoc, which was to become the front line in the church's fight against heresy, there were followers, as elsewhere in Europe, of several different heretical beliefs, some dualist. There is no reliable contemporary evidence for any organised 'Cathar' church, which is now recognised by scholars to have been a modern and misleading invention. Writing in the 1180s, the Cistercian abbot Geoffrey of Vigeois, describing a recantation of two heretics at Le Puy in 1178, labelled them as Albigensians – people living in the region of Albi. This name was from the early thirteenth century used by the crusaders from the north to signify all their enemies, and proved very persistent, from the late twentieth century being often displaced by the term Cathar.

These Albigensian heretics were known to contemporaries as 'good men' or 'good women', the *perfecti*, following the apostolic life, an existence of strict asceticism and abstinence matching that of the harshest religious order. Noted for their holiness and courtesy, they were treated with great respect and admiration by their followers and adherents, who might attend sermons or the breaking of bread. Their followers were from the higher as well as the lower ranks of society, and some nobles were important patrons of the movement.[69]

In the same account Geoffrey of Vigeois drew on a toxic concoction of contemporary anti-clerical sentiment and lurid popular imaginings to confect a powerful account of the dualist beliefs of such heretics, claiming that they practised sexual orgies, abortion and infanticide. His ideas met a receptive audience and, further embroidered, were to represent what the agents of the inquisition would expect to find and would use torture to extract.[70]

In the last years of the twelfth century the Waldenses also put down strong foundations in the Languedoc; although not diverging doctrinally from the established church they were regarded still as heretical. Their founder was Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons who gave up his fortune and his place in society to become an itinerant preacher and to spread the message of apostolic poverty. Some years later Francis of Assisi was to do the same and was to be accepted and deployed by the church as a spiritual champion (pp. 288–289). But in 1179 Pope Alexander III, after the examination of Waldo and his followers at the third Lateran council, refused them permission to preach unless welcomed by the local clergy – a very unlikely state of affairs. This Waldo's adherents refused to accept, and after clashes with local priests they were driven from the lands of the archbishop of Lyons, scattering into the Languedoc and northern Italy. The breach with the church became wider when they were named as heretics in 1184 in the papal bull *Ad abolendam*.

In the Midi, however, little was done against the Waldenses, who were well established in centres such as Albi, Limoux, Carcassonne and Montpellier by the time of the Albigensian crusade. In 1205 the French and Italian wings split, and some of the French Waldenses, such as Durand of Huesca and Bernard Prim and their followers, even rejoined the Catholic church. The rest, the preachers and their 'friends' who supported them in their austere existence, suffered heavy persecution in the first part of the thirteenth century, but just survived and were still found in small groups here in the early 1300s. Waldensianism was, indeed, probably the only twelfth-century heresy to last through from its foundation to the reformation and beyond.

Learning, literature and the schools in France

The profound economic, social and political changes in western Europe of the twelfth century were matched with a burgeoning of artistic, literary and intellectual activity.[71] The word 'renaissance', meaning rebirth, is often used to describe this movement. Although not entirely accurate, in that learning and literature were far from defunct in the eleventh century, this usage certainly reflects the twelfth century's revival of art and letters under the influence of classical models.[72] Bernard of Chartres declared that the men of his day were like dwarfs standing on the shoulders of the giants of antiquity; although smaller in stature, they could see further for as long as they stayed aloft. For the writers and scholars of the twelfth century not only built on their own classical legacy but went beyond it. If their movement was a renaissance, it was also more besides.

France, and particularly the Paris region, played a central and vitally important part. It was the home of a new artistic and architectural style, known now as Gothic, of important literary developments, and of a flourishing and inventive monasticism. The revival of learning took place in its schools in monasteries such as Bec in Normandy and Saint-Germain-des-Prés (Image 4.7), and Saint-Victor and in the cathedrals at Paris, Reims, Laon, Orléans and, to a lesser extent, Chartres. Major libraries were built up by many ecclesiastical communities as texts, all copied by hand, were disseminated widely.

Paris and the other schools of northern France were the focus of the study and development of the traditional classical and scholastic disciplines: in particular the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric and logic) and to a lesser degree the *quadrivium*

IMAGE 4.7 Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris, tower, twelfth century

Photo © C. West

(arithmetic, music, astronomy and geometry). There was a revival of interest in the teaching of logic, in which Anselm of Bec and Bernard of Chartres were major figures, and, stemming from this, significant work was done on the resolution of conflicting authorities, on the development of the dialectical method and on the application of logic to other fields of study. Peter Abelard made an important contribution to the growth of scholasticism with his *Sic et Non*, a theological treatise discussing such propositions as 'that to God all things are possible, and *contra*'.

Scholasticism reached full development with the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas in the mid-thirteenth century. The rediscovery of Aristotle's *New Logic* and other texts increased a growing interest in logic at the expense of grammar, rhetoric and literature, and later the arrival of the works of Averroës, the twelfth-century Muslim philosopher, caused the church considerable concern over the upholding of orthodoxy.

The study of theology was closely linked with that of logic; Abelard had moved theology away from the traditional glosses on the Bible or the fathers. Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, written in Paris *c.*1150, was to carry this a stage further and remained a vitally important theological textbook for centuries. Then there was the study of rhetoric, which moved gradually away from its original basis of the study of Latin texts towards the practical art of the composition of letters, the *ars dictaminis*: the school of Orléans was noted for this skill.

The schools in the south of France were closely bound up with intellectual developments in northern Italy, the focus of the revival south of the Alps. Roman law was centred at Bologna in Italy, where Justinian's great summary, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, was recovered in full, extensively analysed and commented upon. A school of civil law was set up at Montpellier around 1160, which later became a university, and from here the study of Roman law filtered north to Orléans, Paris and the royal court, where trained civil lawyers, laymen not clerics, were to prove loyal and useful servants of the king.[73] Under the influence of the southern French written law, the customary law of the north was eventually codified in the thirteenth century.

Bologna was also the centre of canon law studies. Here Gratian performed the same service for church law as Peter Lombard had for theology in his *Decretum*, or the *Concordance of Discordant Canons*, issued in about 1140. The study of canon law spread to the north as the growth of papal government brought with it an increase in case law, and papal decretals were collected in the northern as well as the southern centres. Likewise, developments in the study of science, medicine and philosophy were to spread, stimulated by the recovery and translation of classical and Muslim texts by Euclid, Galen, Hippocrates, Aristotle and Averroës, and by many others.

Contemporaries were well aware of the influence of antiquity upon them. Interest in ancient Rome was particularly strong in the early twelfth century and had a number of different manifestations. At Saint-Denis, Abbot Suger rebuilt his church in magnificent and novel style with the goal of restoring it to its ancient

splendours, and extensively referenced the Latin author Lucan in his '*Life of Louis VI*'. The former monk of Cluny, Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, was a noted collector of antique Roman statues. The architect at Autun cathedral imitated in the elevation of his church the Roman city gate of the town. Classical Latin writings too were copied and widely studied. Many ecclesiastics regarded prose writers such as Cicero as far more suitable for study than the racy works of Ovid or Horace: Guibert of Nogent declared, not wholly convincingly, that he regretted having read such profane poets in his youth.

Renewed interest in classical authors went hand in hand with the study of Latin grammar, the works of Priscian and Donatus, and there was a serious interest in Latin literature. Latin poetry was also written in great profusion, some on Christian themes such as the collection of poems and hymns by Baudri, abbot of Bourgueil and later bishop of Dol. Also making an appearance was the goliardic poem, a Latin lyric, often in a markedly satirical strain, by authors such as Hugh of Orléans.

John of Salisbury, an Englishman much at home in France, who studied at Paris and perhaps at Chartres, is an example of the learning of the earlier 'renaissance' at its best, whose work gives expression to the human situation.[74] Indeed, England rather than northern France was the leader in developments in the literature of government, but by the end of the twelfth century the French royal court was developing more sophisticated administrative records. Written instruments, charters and deeds were becoming increasingly important as evidence, and the twelfth century saw, as well as an improvement in the style and form of the charter, flourishing schools of forgers who resolved gaps or ambiguities in their title deeds by filling them themselves. Some, such as the Saint-Denis monks, were audacious but moderately skilful; others were far less competent, such as members of the order of Grandmont, who were to be hauled up before Louis IX for their activities.

The writing of history showed an increased sophistication during the twelfth century, with a more critical approach to source materials and a better developed sense of chronology. The Anglo-Norman chroniclers such as Robert of Torigny, abbot of Mont-Saint-Michel, were leaders here. The monks of Saint-Denis gradually emerged as the official royal historians, doing much to enhance the kings' image alongside that of their own monastery (pp. 188–189). Biographies and personal memoirs – such as the remarkable *History of my Calamities* by Peter Abelard – began to appear in Latin, as did works in the vernacular such as the royal chronicle by the Anonymous of Béthune, Wace's Anglo-Norman poems and the *History of William the Marshall*.[75]

In vernacular literature the south of France exercised a strong influence. The troubadours and the *trouvères*, their northern equivalents, created and disseminated the *chansons de geste*, vernacular epic poems such as the *Chanson de Roland*, recounting heroic exploits on the battlefields. Lyric poems on the theme of courtly love appeared in the south of France at the end of the eleventh century and spread north by the middle of the twelfth. Here, Chrétien of Troyes and Marie of France concentrated on the Arthurian cycle of stories, inspired partly by the fictional *History of the Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Other poets, such as the mid-thirteenth century

Rutebeuf of Paris, wrote in a genre known as bourgeois literature about subjects such as love and spring, or their own problems, treating them often in a satirical manner.

To the cosmopolitan society of western Europe, the Île-de-France, at the heart of these changes, was thought of as *la douce France*, 'sweet France'. The French kings were popular rulers, if relatively impecunious, and according to Hugh of Champfleury, royal chancellor from 1150 until 1172, their administrators seemed more interested in intellectual problems, life, death and eternity and in the historical lessons of the past than the practical difficulties of government. The ruthless efficiency of Henry II's administration was undoubtedly more effective, but less philosophical and less personal. The reputation of the Capetians, if not immediately their power, was thus enhanced by the twelfth-century 'renaissance', establishing a kind of cultural supremacy.[76]

The growth in royal power, 1108–1226

The status of the French monarchy

Until 1204 the Capetians were overshadowed by the regional princes within France, and by the Empire outside it. Yet during the course of the twelfth century the standing and reputation of the French monarchy, carefully curated and reconstructed in both theory and practice, increased disproportionately and advantageously. While they suffered many setbacks and challenges, this revival enabled the French kings often to punch above their weight.

Key to this was the changing relationship between the king and the princes. Despite their longlasting struggles with the king of France, even the overmighty Plantagenets showed reverence for his office. In 1158 Henry II, as count of Anjou, enthusiastically pursued what he saw as his hereditary role as Louis VII's seneschal. When in 1159 he was campaigning to make good his claim as duke of Aquitaine over Toulouse, but found the French king in occupation of the city, he fell back, not willing to attack the king. According to the chronicler Ralph of Diceto, this was because of the reverence he owed him. During a period of rapprochement, in 1169, when a further crusade was being discussed, Henry visited Louis in Paris, even making a pilgrimage to Saint-Denis, the focus of the cult of Capetian kingship. Louis VII reciprocated in 1178, when Henry II was in England, offering his lands formal protection, and agreeing to go to his aid if requested by his *baillis* in Anjou.[77]

Philip Augustus and Richard I often displayed acute rivalry. In 1190, however, Richard reluctantly acknowledged the superior status of the king of France. This was when their crusading army, *en route* for Palestine, was outside the walls of Messina in Sicily which Richard had captured, planting only his banners on the walls. But when challenged about this the English king backed down. Conceding that Philip was the superior king, he allowed them to be replaced with the French royal banners. Tellingly, from 1200, and perhaps earlier, all letters between the Plantagenets and the Capetians put the French kings first.[78]

This respect for the royal office seems to have originated in the intrinsic attributes of the French monarchy and in the shared political culture and values of the king and the princes which had sustained the early Capetian monarchy at its times of greatest weakness. The king was seen as the embodiment of a just, orderly Christian rule, from which emanated the legitimacy of both his own and the princely office.[79] And principles began to emerge which governed their relationship.

One was that the king could be a lord but not a vassal. In his *De administratione*, Abbot Suger was clear that the king could do homage to no one. Promulgating his view that royal power derived from Saint-Denis, Louis VI, he said, would have become the vassal of the abbey for the French Vexin had he not been the king.[80]

The obligations of his vassals towards the king similarly became increasingly well defined. Peace homage or border homage signifying the relative equality of the contracting parties gradually gave way to homage for land, and later for all the holdings of each of the princes within the kingdom, with clearly defined obligations attached.

This process was hard-won: as late as 1202, John, when summoned to Philip Augustus's court in Paris, responded that he was not obliged to attend and would 'only confer with the king on the subject of the frontier between the kingdom and the duchy. This had been agreed in ancient times between the duke and the king and confirmed in genuine documents'.[81] By the end of the twelfth century the idea that the king was liege lord, who was owed liege homage, superior to all other forms of homage, by the princes for all their lands, was nevertheless becoming more widely accepted. Once crowned king, Henry II seems to have refused to pay homage to the crown for his French lands in person, until forced to concede this in 1183 in the face of major difficulties with his sons and with Aquitaine.

Emblematic of this shift was the fate of the great elm tree on the borders of the French and Norman lands at Gisors, a delightful arbour providing shade from the sun which had long served as the traditional meeting and negotiating place for the two sides at the centre of a highly-disputed area. In 1188, during rancorous exchanges and skirmishes, Philip Augustus and his army chopped the elm down, as an assertion of his superior power, and a personal and highly insulting gesture, noted by chroniclers on both sides of the channel.[82]

An important aspect of this suzerain power was the king's right to agree the succession arrangements for the principalities, and to receive the payment of reliefs.[83] In Normandy, the dukes (and kings of England) Henry I and Stephen permitted their heirs, William and Eustace, to become vassals of the French king for the duchy of Normandy. As count of Anjou, Henry Plantagenet was ordered before the French court in 1152 after he had married Eleanor of Aquitaine without Louis's permission, but he ignored the summons altogether. Yet as King Henry II, he similarly encouraged his heirs – Henry the Young King, who was Louis VII's son-in-law, Richard and John – to perform homage to legitimise their claims as heirs to the Plantagenet lands. Whilst John as king refused homage to Philip Augustus

in 1199, he conceded a far more comprehensive recognition of the French king's rights in 1200 at the Treaty of Le Goulet: John paid homage and a substantial relief to the king and recognised him as his overlord. This would give Philip a strong legal claim for his conquest of Normandy and Anjou.[84]

The gathering at Saint-Denis in 1124 before Louis VI, when Louis VI and his army, after a highly stage-managed ceremony, rode out and drove off Emperor Henry V, is an important example of mutual support between the king and the princes, and heralds almost a century of the gradual rebalancing of power between them. Contingents from Blois and Champagne, from Nevers and Vermandois and Flanders, and from various sees including Reims, Châlons, Laon, Soissons and Orléans, from Paris and Saint-Denis, all rallied in support of the king.

Abbot Suger wrote of these events:

> Whether one considers our modern times or looks back to ancient times, France never accomplished a more remarkable exploit than this, nor, uniting the forces of its members, ever more gloriously deployed its powers than when at the same time, it triumphed over the Holy Roman Emperor and the English King.[85]

The idea of France as a kingdom and a community, even if not yet a territorial entity, is here stressed.

The word *Francia* had a number of meanings in the eleventh century, one of which and perhaps the most common was that of the royal lands. Although the whole French kingdom might also on occasions be described as *Francia*, it was quite often given instead a name such as 'all the land of the king of France' (*tota terra regis Franciae*) or 'the whole kingdom' (*universum regnum*). During the course of the twelfth century such alternatives began to give way to the simpler France or *Francia* again, as royal power in the kingdom revived. The king continued to be described in official documents as 'king of the French' (*rex Francorum*) until the mid-thirteenth century.

During the course of the twelfth century, other duties of the princes to the king were increasingly recognised and more frequently performed, such as attendance at royal councils. Under Louis VI and in the first part of Louis VII's reign some royal assemblies were called for the ceremonies of crown wearing, whilst others had the characteristics of Carolingian-style *placita* or feudal councils, the king taking advice from a number of important men, described as his leading men (*proceres*), faithful men (*fideles*) or courtiers (*palatini*). Some such councils were used for important political decisions to be made, as when in 1111 the opponents of Hugh of Le Puiset gathered at Melun, when in 1128 the disputed election in Flanders was discussed, and when in 1130 the choice between Anacletus II and Innocent II as pope was made. But, except for the military gathering in 1124, the number of princes who attended such meetings was limited.

Following another major council in 1146, however, princes and great nobles appeared far more frequently at court, as in 1152 at Beaugency when Louis VII divorced Eleanor of Aquitaine, in 1155 at Soissons, in 1173 at Paris and in 1178 at Reims for the coronation of the young Philip Augustus. The princes who attended and endorsed royal decisions were described in royal charters as *barons*, a word that had begun life in the eleventh century as the rough equivalent of vassal, but in the twelfth was applied increasingly to the great men of the realm. Louis VII's peace council at Soissons in 1155 was particularly significant. Here, with the duke of Burgundy and the counts of Flanders, Nevers and Champagne, the king promulgated the norms for good lordship and protection of the weak, on the model of the imperial peace councils initiated in 1103 (Image 4.8).[86]

There are also signs of the formation of a royal council, probably under the influence of Roman law: in Philip Augustus's reign the most important princes were it seems acting as the king's formal counsellors on a regular basis and making judgements. The college of peers of France, in the mid-twelfth century an alluring literary conceit, gradually acquired real powers so that by the 1220s these leading magnates were involved in the royal succession, underpinning the legitimacy of the dynasty.[87] Later the title became a mark of great distinction, its functions largely honorific.

IMAGE 4.8 Great Seal of Louis VII showing the king enthroned, sitting in judgement

From N. de Wailly, *Eléments de Paléographie*, ii (Paris, 1838), planche C, no 2. (*c.* 1137)

One significant function of the royal court was to render justice to all the king's vassals. Regional princes appeared before the king on a number of occasions, and so too did the king's lesser vassals, both from the Île-de-France and from more widely scattered areas throughout the kingdom; Louis VII, for example, drew in cases from Burgundy, Auvergne, Saintonge, Flanders and Toulouse. Under Louis VI Aimon and Archambaud, disputing the lordship of Bourbon, came before the court, whilst in 1150 the quarrel of William, count of Nevers, and Geoffrey of Donzy over Geoffrey's fief ended in a judicial duel in front of the king. Philip Augustus summoned a number of full courts or councils to render justice and take advice: the meeting convened in 1220 was described as a *parlement*, the first recorded use of this term in France.

Abbeys, priories and cathedral chapters from an increasingly wide area of France also tended to turn to the Capetians for protection against the encroachment of local lords. In 1153 the bishop of Langres appealed against the refusal of Odo II, duke of Burgundy, to pay him homage. Other bishops sought redress against the activities of the communes that had formed in their cities. The abbot of Corbie appealed against the activities of the lord of Encre, and the abbot of Vézelay against the count of Nevers. The king showed himself ready to intervene ever more widely in response to such requests.

As well as extending the coverage of royal justice, the twelfth-century French kings began to issue ordinances for the whole kingdom, not just for the principality. Probably the first was Louis VII's instructions of 1144 banishing Jewish converts to Christianity who had relapsed, and this was followed in 1155 by the constitutions of Soissons, which established the peace of God throughout the kingdom for ten years.

The royal charters issued by these four kings also witness the spread of royal influence and authority in the kingdom. Their beneficiaries came from an ever-widening area, but even greater was the spread of demands for royal confirmations and safeguards, particularly from churches. Discounting those he issued as duke of Aquitaine, Louis VII still granted charters over an area far wider than Henry I had done 100 years earlier. The same holds true of the royal itinerary. Whereas Henry I had rarely ventured outside the royal principality, Louis VII travelled extensively inside France and went outside its borders on a number of occasions, as both his successors were to do.

Although royal power in the twelfth century remained relatively limited in terms of land and resources, the reputation of the king as overlord, lawgiver and protector was beginning to revive quite widely, well before the great conquests of the early thirteenth century: towns increasingly sought royal charters of communal rights against the interests of their local lords.[88] Reviving too was the efficacy of royal finances and administration and the image of the French king as the holder of sacral powers and as the defender of the kingdom.

The image of monarchy

The restoration and renewal of the image, standing and reputation of the French kingship was hugely significant in the revival of royal power. This would not have

been possible without the inherent sacral attributes of the crown, and the king's ecclesiastical, judicial, feudal and political powers. Although at times dormant, these characteristics had survived intact throughout the Capetians' greatest period of weakness, preserved in great measure because of the political culture which bound the king and princes together.

Yet critical in restoring royal standing were the actions of the king: the impact of Louis VI's and Louis VII's reassertion of physical and legal authority against the turbulent castellans of the Île de France, famed for their crusading deeds and valour, should not be underestimated. As Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis commented:

> The hand of kings is very strong; and by virtue of a consecrated right of their office [kings] repress the audacity of tyrants whenever they see them provoking wars and taking pleasure in endless pillaging, in persecuting the poor and in destroying churches. Kings intervene to prevent these excesses, which, if not opposed, enflame tyrants still more madly.[89]

Also of vital significance, though, was the restoration of the royal image. This was made manifest in great public displays, impressive buildings reflecting and enhancing royal power, and the referencing and harnessing in written and material culture of antique models of imperial authority, the Carolingian exemplar of sacral kingship and the prestige of the crusading movement. The kings were undoubtedly willing participants in these developments, and at times took the lead, but it was French ecclesiastics who took the primary role in the curation of the royal image, fusing popular culture, the romantic world of the knight and the pilgrim, with sacral kingship. The best-known protagonist of this during the first half of the twelfth century, Abbot Suger, was prompted certainly by his loyalty to the crown, but above all by his loyalty to his abbey, its resources and its standing in kingdom, church and society.

The cult of Charlemagne was long-believed to have held a key place in Suger's propaganda, but many scholars now see this as an exaggerated view, believing, rather, that Suger portrayed him as an exemplar for his kings of holy monarchy rather than a direct antecedent. This was because Charlemagne was at this time identified primarily with the German emperors.[90] Furthermore, Suger's debt to the Saint-Denis community as a whole, and in particular to his predecessor, Abbot Adam, is now more widely acknowledged in assessing his achievements.

Saint-Denis had been founded in the Merovingian period, supposedly by Dagobert I, who reputedly gave it extravagant gifts and granted the profits of a fair (in October – the later fair of Lendit was in June) that enabled the abbey to expand rapidly. The abbey church became the principal pantheon of the west Frankish royal houses in succession: Merovingians, Carolingians and early Capetians. Their bones were held in veneration alongside the relics of Saint Denis and his legendary companions Eleutherius and Rusticus. The link between the abbey and the crown was thus highly prestigious and its benefits as a royal necropolis were significant.

Although he had claimed the lay advocacy of Saint-Denis in 1077, Philip I, however, had broken with tradition by choosing to be buried at the abbey of Fleury (Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire). In the pages of Suger's *Life of Louis VI*, the community's disappointment with this desertion is palpable. Indeed, Suger found the need to explain this away; Philip, he said, expressed on his deathbed the wish for personal intercession. In Saint-Denis he would have been lost amongst all the other kings.[91]

The Fleury community rapidly sought to build on its royal links, Hugh of Fleury setting out its longstanding role in promoting royal legitimacy in a text dedicated to Louis VI.[92] Other great ecclesiastical bodies, too, promoted their royal connections, notably Saint-Remi at Reims, where the later Carolingian kings were buried. The archbishops of Reims claimed the right – hotly disputed by the archbishops of Sens – to crown the kings of France, on the basis of the holy chrism miraculously brought from heaven by a dove for the anointing of Clovis, almost seven centuries earlier.[93]

To counter this, the community at Saint-Denis, which had been actively curating and promoting its illustrious past for several decades, emphasised in particular the view that its saint was the special patron and protector of the realm after God. The Saint-Denis monks went to enormous lengths to promulgate this notion. In 1108 Adam instituted a prestigious annual celebration of the death of Dagobert, the legendary founder of Saint-Denis, associating him with the Capetian king. This may have helped the abbey to recover substantial and valuable lands and rights over the next few years, which were confirmed by Louis VI.

At some time after 1114, a Latin chronicle, the *Gesta Gentis Francorum*, appeared at Saint-Denis, recounting the origins of the French people from their Trojan origins onwards, and in which Dagobert played a prominent role. The *Gesta* was to launch the monks of Saint-Denis in their distinguished and notable role of historiographers-royal; it is quite likely that Adam was the initiator.[94] Stressing the important role of his abbey in the administration of the realm, he furthermore worked closely with the king to reassert the rights of crown and abbey against the violent and unruly castellans of the region such as Hugh of Le Puiset. The king met violence with violence, meting out retributive justice in his struggles to restore order.[95]

In 1120 Louis VI made a solemn visit to Saint-Denis, very belatedly to return his crown, post-coronation, to the abbey, in accordance with earlier royal custom and practice. The king declared that the royal insignia should by right be in the keeping of the holy martyr as the protector of the kingdom. This custom, which bolstered the links of the abbey with coronations, his successors would continue by depositing their ever-growing collection of crowns and other regalia at the abbey. At the same time Louis VI formally opted for Saint-Denis as his future burial place: a great triumph for Adam, who began the practice of instituting anniversary rituals for the kings interred in his abbey. In 1122, with Suger now as abbot, King Louis issued a confirmation of many of his previous donations, adding new rights between Saint-Denis and Montmartre.[96]

Suger, administrator, political adviser, builder and writer, had been raised in the abbey of Saint-Denis, as had the future Louis VI, although their times spent at the school did not coincide.[97] Abbot from 1122 in succession to Adam, in 1127 he became Louis's closest counsellor and adviser after the fall of Stephen of Garlande. Described by contemporaries as short in stature and slender, not robust in health, vain but vigorous, witty and charming, the abbot was a man of modest origins but grandiose ideas. These emerge clearly from his writings.

Suger's monastic reforms at Saint-Denis, his programme of rebuilding and adorning the abbey, his orchestration of sacred festivals and royal ceremonial, his acquisition of lands and rights, his historical and biographical writings, much of which built on the work of his predecessor Adam, were intended primarily to contribute towards the reputation of the abbey, its patron saint and its relics. His two kings, Louis VI and Louis VII, while generally in reality willing participants, were portrayed, incongruously, in a supporting role.[98]

Far more of a Gregorian reformer in his outlook and practice than has often been recognised, and working closely with a succession of popes, Suger had to contend with these two successive kings holding old-fashioned views that the church was theirs to exploit. He had to do his best with such unpromising material, and hence, pragmatically, in his writings he often stressed traditional royal virtues. Yet Louis VI and Louis VII seem also to have been popular kings: they governed without a sense of strain.[99]

Many of the ideas of Suger and his community about kingship would have had an impact only in a limited circle of clerics and courtiers, and even here the royal attributes, often idealised, must have been recognised as vastly outstripping the real abilities and achievements of Louis VI and Louis VII. Yet in their practical applications – fostering the image and standing of kingship through grand buildings and ceremonial – these ideas about monarchy began to be manifest. The glorification of the king and his realm also begins to be expressed at a more popular level, too, as in the *chansons de geste*, some produced at Saint-Denis, which retold the heroic exploits of the French and their kings and linked them with Charlemagne. From these the Capetian reputation clearly benefited.

In his biography of Louis, Suger – claiming for himself some of Adam's achievements – describes the gathering that took place at Saint-Denis in 1124 before Louis VI and his great vassals sallied forth to see off the threat of the German Emperor (pp. 146–147). This highly stage-managed ceremony enhanced royal prestige and symbolised the special ties between king and community. Louis VI, he tells us, in the presence of certain great counsellors, took from the altar the standard of the French Vexin – known later as the *oriflamme* – to which he had the right as count and lay advocate of the Vexin, land held from the abbey (but for which, as king, he did not do homage).

The 1124 ceremony at Saint-Denis brought the abbey considerable rewards. In a charter drafted by the monks, Louis granted the French Vexin to the abbey, although he would continue to hold it as a fief, and would in practice grant it on to William Clito of Normandy in 1127. Far more significant in reality was the

associated grant by the king of the rights to and revenues from the fair of Lendit, created by the bishop of Paris in 1108 for the veneration of certain holy relics of the Passion in Paris. Further material aggregation and enrichment followed, most notably, in 1129, the acquisition of the wealthy priory of Argenteuil, in need of reform, and its lands, the claim based on a forged charter of Louis the Pious. All this was topped off when Pope Innocent II visited Saint-Denis in 1131 for a spectacular celebration of Easter, and confirmed all the lands and rights of the abbey.[100]

Funding was now in place for Suger's crowning ambition, the major rebuilding of the abbey. His seminal series of building works was aimed to restore the church to its ancient glory by extending and embellishing its earlier fabric. Suger's treatise, the *De administratione*, explains the need for the reconstruction:

> because of that inadequacy which we often saw and felt on feast days [when relics were venerated in the church] . . . for the narrowness of the place forced the women to run towards the altar upon the heads of the men as upon a pavement with much anguish and confusion.[101]

Suger may have attempted, unsuccessfully, a reconstruction of the east end as early as the mid-1120s, but his first major works took place during the 1130s.[102] First the western façade was rebuilt to create a hugely grand entrance and to create a climate favourable for reconstructing the choir. The ensemble was flanked by two great towers, which would have dominated the skyline on the route from Paris, and evoked Norman and Ottonian models. Innovatively adorned with a rose window, the façade was topped with crenellations and unified with a horizontal band of statues of kings and saints, with Saint Denis at the centre. Its three great portals, the central one featuring the Last Judgement, were freighted with religious and secular symbolism, referring to the doctrine of the Trinity but seeming also to reference tripartite Roman triumphal arches – the arch of Constantine in Rome and the Roman arch at Orange – which Suger would have seen on his travels (Image 4.9).[103]

The second building campaign was the reconstruction of the choir at the east end, beginning probably in 1140. The choir was constructed in the form of a double ambulatory over the highly revered but reconfigured Carolingian crypt: Suger saw his building campaign as restoring his church to its ancient glories. Yet it was stylistically influenced also by recent and innovative ecclesiastical architecture in the region, most notably at Saint-Martin-des-Champs in Paris, and it broke new ground architecturally.

Often in the past claimed as the first manifestation of the new Gothic style, and certainly an early spectacular exemplar, its complex vaulting system and pointed arches set it apart from other contemporary ecclesiastical buildings. Although later much remodelled under Louis IX, it was to be hugely influential. No attention or cost was spared on the ornamentation and adornment of this space, with its luminous glass, gilded altars, costly gem-encrusted vessels, and a massive golden crucifix standing more than six metres high.[104]

IMAGE 4.9 Abbey of Saint-Denis, west end

Photo © E. Hallam

Suger's crowning moment was the great political event to launch the Second Crusade in June 1147, at the time of the Lendit fair, when he and Pope Eugenius III welcomed the king to Saint-Denis. Having processed from Paris, and in the presence of a vast throng of people, Louis VII entered the abbey church through the recently-completed great portals at the west end, as with Innocent II's visit in 1131, evoking magnificent Roman *triumphus* and papal *adventus* ceremonials. The king received from the pope his pilgrim's purse and from the abbot the *oriflamme* standard, thus in magnificent style being celebrated as the first crusader king.[105] Despite the subsequent failure of the crusade, this was a watershed moment for the Capetians, who came to be seen as embodying and leading this greatest act of

Christian piety and duty. Emphasised and evoked by the continuing use of the ceremonial devised by Suger in 1147 – as when Philip Augustus took the cross prior to his departure on the Third Crusade in 1190 – crusading now underpinned and enhanced their status as 'most Christian kings'.[106]

The impact on contemporaries of the architecture, decoration and stained glass at Saint-Denis must have been extremely powerful. Writing in the mid-twentieth century, Panofsky's view was that Suger created the designs for the abbey as an expression of the thought of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, an early Syrian theologian. Pseudo-Dionysius's work was very well known to the Saint-Denis monks; indeed since the ninth century they had erroneously identified him with their own patron saint, Denis, apostle of the Gauls. Suger, said Panofsky, echoed pseudo-Dionysius by positing in his writings that beauty – in this case created through light, stained glass and rich decoration – would transport worshippers from the material to the non-material, and bring them closer to God. His new Gothic building was an innovative affirmation of these Cluniac aesthetics, countering the austere values of his great critic Bernard of Clairvaux and the Cistercians.[107] More recent scholarship suggests that rather than being seen as an architectural manifesto, this powerful idea, rather clumsily expressed, may better be viewed as a metaphor for how Suger intended his writings and works to inspire and enlighten the reader.[108]

From the last years of Suger's abbacy, and under his successor, the Saint-Denis community began far more actively to draw on the cult of Charlemagne and incorporate it into their promotion of the monarchy through epic tales, historiographical works and forged charters.[109] The monks were masterly exponents of the contemporary practice by the church of fusing epic, romance and religion into a single grand expression, drawing together popular culture, chivalry and religion.[110]

An example of this was the crusading window at Saint-Denis, dating probably to the mid-twelfth century, its images linking the First Crusade with the story from the highly popular vernacular *chanson de geste* entitled *How Charlemagne brought the cross and crown of the Lord from Constantinople to Aachen*, dating from the late eleventh century. A coda, linked by some scholars with Saint-Denis, affirms that Charles the Bald had translated some of these relics to the abbey, giving a strong provenance to the relics of the true cross and the crown of thorns held by the abbey.[111]

Associated perhaps with this, and particularly audacious, was a diploma purporting to come from Charlemagne but very evidently forged by the monks in about the mid-twelfth century, perhaps under Suger or perhaps under his successor Odo of Deuil. This preposterous document has Charlemagne giving the monastery the status of the metropolitan church in France, in gratitude for the aid the saint had provided in protecting the realm from its enemies. In the same text, 'Charlemagne' also declares that he holds France in fief from God and the holy martyr, linking his flag, the *oriflamme*, with the French royal banner, and states that he and his successors shall in recognition of this spiritual servitude henceforth place four *besants* on the altar of the abbey each year. This confected duty some of the French kings, at least from Philip Augustus onwards, actually performed.[112]

It was not however until the reign of Philip Augustus that the cult of Charlemagne was deployed more explicitly to glorify Capetian kingship. In the mid-twelfth century it was associated primarily with the Holy Roman Empire: from his imperial coronation in 1155, Frederick Barbarossa and his court identified with and used Charlemagne to symbolise and support his imperial authority, secular and ecclesiastical. The canonisation of Charlemagne in 1165 strengthened the notion that Frederick was his successor as God's preferred leader and protector of Christendom and Charlemagne's burial place at Aachen became an increasingly important shrine. On his accession in 1215, Frederick's grandson, Frederick II, anxious to strengthen his imperial authority, would follow his coronation with a crusader's vow and a magnificent reburial of Charlemagne's remains.

After Louis VII's marriage to Adela of Champagne in 1160, and the birth of Philip Augustus in 1165, the links of the Capetians with Charlemagne began to be recognised and celebrated in France. Adela's Carolingian antecedents enabled a direct genealogical link to be made with Charlemagne. This was strengthened with the birth of Philip's son, the future Louis VIII, to Isabella of Hainault, also attributed with Carolingian ancestry, in 1179.[113] To some contemporaries, Louis's birth appeared to fulfil the legendary Valerian prophecy, foretelling the return of the French kingdom to the line of Charlemagne after seven generations.

The writings about the emperor that circulated in Philip Augustus's court in the earlier part of his reign are somewhat inconsistent in their treatment of the Carolingian–Capetian links. In the *Karolinus* of Giles of Paris, a poem written for Prince Louis in around 1200, these connections are not stressed unduly, although one version includes a family tree linking the Capetians with the Carolingians. The emphasis is rather on Charlemagne as a model and exemplar of sacral kingship.[114] Although not noted for any strong literary or historical interests, Philip Augustus seems to have identified with Charlemagne. He named an illegitimate son Peter Carlot in 1209, and Gerald of Wales describes his dreams of returning the French kingdom to its former glories of the days of the great emperor. By the end of his reign the notion of the return of the kingdom to the race of Charlemagne (the *reditus*) had taken root; this was to be more fully written up by Vincent of Beauvais in the 1240s.[115]

Many other ideas contributed to the growing mystique of monarchy. Although not yet a generic royal attribute, the healing of disease through the royal touch was it seems associated with Louis VII, as a sign of an outstandingly pious king. During his procession to Saint-Denis in 1147, he visited a hospital for lepers and may have effected a cure by laying on his hands.[116]

The notion of the king as defender of the realm from internal threats and external enemies also gained increasing currency in the light of Capetian military achievements. Louis VI was said by Suger to have enjoined his son to guard and defend the church, the poor and orphans and to maintain the rights of all his subjects. Perhaps at the request of Philip Augustus, in about 1210 Hélinand of Froidmont, a Cistercian monk, produced an edifying treatise about good rulership, derived from the works of John of Salisbury. In positing that the power of

kings could redeem the people, his was an early precursor of what would in the thirteenth century become a powerful political idea.[117]

In the late twelfth century Rigord developed the theme of royal defence of the realm in his justification of Philip Augustus's persecution of the Jews, suggesting this, like the persecution of heretics and of those who attacked churches, was God's work. He justified also both the subsidies raised by Philip in 1194, and Philip's attack on the churches controlled by Richard I, as necessary for the defence of the realm. These linked ideas were to have a major if contested future in French royal propaganda (pp. 396–399),[118] and were invoked by chroniclers describing the showpiece event of Philip's reign, the battle of Bouvines in 1214.

The victory of Philip Augustus in 1214 had a powerful effect on the image of the French monarchy, at both the intellectual and the popular levels. A small but well-organised French force defeated an army thrice its own size (p. 167): this was the stuff of heroism, which could be seen also as an indication that God had favoured the French. The battle, provoked by Philip's enemies, had taken place on a Sunday, breaking the peace of God, and the French king's principal adversaries, John and Otto, had both in their time been at the receiving end of innumerable papal anathemas (as had, indeed, Philip himself). 'Through the victory God gave, the Capetian monarchy became truly consecrated.'[119]

Philip had gained a great treasure, noble captives and a prestige that enabled him to deal with the princes of France, with other kings and the emperor from a position of unprecedented strength. The French king made much of the event, with a triumphal entry into Paris, with Prince Louis, fresh from his own victory at La Roche-au-Moine, their captives in chains. A week's revelry followed in the streets of the capital.[120] Philip's one and only monastic foundation, a house of Victorine canons, was built near to Senlis and named La Victoire after the battle. As with William the Conqueror's foundation of Battle Abbey on the site of the battle of Hastings, this monastery was intended as both a celebration and a thank-offering to God for a great victory. There is no evidence that Philip performed a penance for victory as William did, however, nor did he pay very much of the cost of the foundation, which was left to Warin, bishop of Senlis, who had played an important role in the battle.[121]

Again, as with William the Conqueror, clerical historiographers made much of Philip's victory. The *Philippidos*, a vast work composed by William the Breton, inspired by the deeds of Alexander the Great, has as its high point the battle of Bouvines. The king's victory is given a mythical quality and symbolises several different kinds of triumphs – that of good defeating evil in a holy crusade against God's enemies, that of the triumph of the just man in the judicial duel, that of a national victory of God's champion.

Unanimous rejoicing, William says, broke out throughout France as Philip, like Pompey, Caesar, Vespasian or Titus, celebrated his great triumph. In later accounts, such as Philip Mousket's verses composed around 1240, and the writings of the Minstrel of Reims, dating from about 1260, Bouvines entered into the realm of legend and was linked with the flourishing cult of sacral kingship.[122]

With it went many of the earlier ideas. Mousket emphasised the role of Saint Denis and Charlemagne's *oriflamme*, and the Minstrel, the idea of the rebirth of the monarchy and the legitimacy of Capetian rule. In 120 years the Capetians had come a long way. From kings too powerless and too obscure even to find biographers there had sprung a hero-king, whose grandson was to become a saint.

Queens and queenship

At the king's side was the queen consort.[123] Although crowned and anointed like her husband, her liturgy and regalia did not afford her the same sovereign powers and status. But her lands and perceived influence often gave her a significant standing in the kingdom, which she would retain if she outlived her husband and remained on good terms with his successor as king.

Royal marriage – and likewise noble marriage – was a key element in diplomacy, a way of forging political alliances inside the kingdom and less frequently outside its borders. An excellent choice of bride would enhance the status and lineage of the royal or noble house. Examples are the marriages of the two daughters of Louis VII and Eleanor of Aquitaine to the counts of Champagne, and Blois, and the nuptials of Philip Augustus and Isabella of Hainault, niece of Philip Count of Flanders. Personal fondness was not a prerequisite, although a lack of it evidently drove Philip Augustus to repudiate Ingeborg of Denmark. In the early years of their marriage Louis VII was thought to have had great affection for Eleanor of Aquitaine, while Louis VIII and Blanche of Castile, affianced when small children and growing up together, appear to have enjoyed a happy marriage.

The primary purpose of royal unions was however to produce male heirs: a major factor in the decision of Louis VII to divorce Eleanor of Aquitaine seems to have been the lack of male issue from their marriage – although Eleanor was later to have several sons with Henry II – and Louis VII's third wife, the redoubtable Adela of Champagne, would provide him with his hugely valued son, Philip Augustus. Right through to 1328 all the Capetian kings would be ultimately successful in ensuring the transfer of royal power through male primogeniture.

Brought to the French royal household often at a very young age, queens at times struggled to forge their own identities and to build up power in an often highly political and factionalised environment. Those who came from outside the kingdom, such as Ingeborg of Denmark, who was at first unable to speak French, seem to have had a particularly difficult time. Adela of Champagne, mother of Philip Augustus, showed huge resentment and behaved cruelly towards his child bride, Isabella of Hainault, mocking her lower social standing and her accent. Isabella had to build her own support at court and with the people, but motherhood would provide the queen with a strong political identity of her own.

Queenship commanded a very high status, many queens eliciting great popular love and respect. This could be extended through the queen's visible presence and pious works into a nurturing role for the kingdom too. The queen possessed a visual identity through the imagery on her seals and might also make provision

for a major funerary monument in her memory, as with the tomb of Adela of Maurienne at the abbey of Montmartre, which she had co-founded with Louis VI.

In terms of their documented acts, formal queenly power in France (as was also the case in England) arguably reached its apogee at the time of Adela of Maurienne, in many respects co-ruler with Louis VI. Highly influential at court and a moving force in the disgrace of Stephen of Garlande, she dealt with the papacy alongside the king and shared in the making of ecclesiastical appointments. Royal charters were dated with her regnal year as well as his, and 45 were co-issued by Louis and Adela. Thereafter formal recognition for the queen's role dwindles in official records. But rather than reflecting a significant diminution in queenly power, as Facinger[124] believed, this may at least in part be the result of a professionalisation of the royal administration and a greater formality in chancery processes.

Regencies or guardianship continued to be an expected part of the role of queen; Blanche of Castile would exercise this role on behalf of Louis VIII, as she would for their son Louis IX (pp. 255–259). Prior to Louis VIII's accession she also organised a major force to relieve him during his campaign in England in 1217. The role of regent could equally be exercised by the queen mother, as when Adela of Champagne stood in for her son Philip Augustus when he went on crusade. Queens could also be highly influential as counsellors to their husbands: notable here were Eleanor of Aquitaine and Blanche of Castile.

Often major landholders, queens held both the lands endowed on them by their husbands on marriage and the lands and dowries they brought with them – the most spectacular example being the duchy of Aquitaine, brought by Eleanor. From the royal treasury, they were often allocated substantial budgets for their households, clothes and jewels, and were thus important sources of patronage and gifts. Ingeborg, who developed into a canny operator, complained that Philip Augustus was not providing her with adequate funds for her necessary expenses. Surviving royal accounts suggest that in reality her spending on clothes considerably outstripped that of her estranged husband, the king.

Blanche of Castile had a major role at the hub of a lively court culture, a contrast with the later part of Philip Augustus's reign when there was no formal queen consort. She was very aware of the ritual significance of the queenly *persona*. In 1224, accompanied by her niece Berengaria, titular queen of Jerusalem, and Ingeborg, by now queen-dowager, Blanche led a grand procession from Notre-Dame to the abbey of Saint-Antoine. Dressed as penitents, the three queens implored divine intercession for a victory for Louis VIII at the siege of La Rochelle: their prayers were answered as the next day the city fell to the French king.

The royal household

For most of Louis VI's reign the royal household was a modest affair. As in Philip I's reign, royal charters tended to be witnessed by local men, often of moderate social standing.[125] But as the king's reputation and royal power grew, the great men of the kingdom were attracted back to court to act as royal counsellors and

to endorse royal decisions. From about 1080 until 1107, the holders of the great – but often in practice overlapping – offices of seneschal, constable, chamberlain, chancellor and butler in the royal household were drawn from the castellan families of the Île-de-France. For example, the Montlhéry-Rochefort family monopolised the office of seneschal until the end of Philip I's reign.

After Louis VI's divorce from Lucienne of Rochefort in 1107 the castellan and knightly families were replaced in these roles by men of humbler rank, most notably the Garlande family. Anseau, Stephen, William and Gilbert occupied most of the great offices from 1107 until 1127. Guy of Senlis from another such family was royal butler from 1108 to 1112, before Gilbert of Garlande.

These *nouveaux riches* officials originated not as castellans but as knights from the great cities and castles, who in the later eleventh century built up very considerable wealth through the royal service, but who had no personal holdings at all. They began, however, to dominate the household in their turn, until in the 1120s Louis VI refused to recognise such positions as hereditary and, after a major conflict, disgraced Stephen and dislodged the Garlande family in 1127. Although Stephen later returned as chancellor, these offices then gradually came to be seen as having honorific and ceremonial significance and were filled increasingly by the regional princes.

Count Ralph of Vermandois, a relative of Louis VI, in 1131 took on the office of seneschal, the sole layman of any wider consequence in attendance on this king. But he was in turn succeeded under Louis VII by Theobald, count of Blois, a relative of the king's third wife Adela of Champagne. Louis also raised several relatives of his own and of Adela to leading ecclesiastical positions, widening his circle of significant supporters, and after about 1150 there were increasingly frequent occasions when a large gathering of leading nobles and ecclesiastics assembled at the royal court.

The success of this upgrading in the status of the royal offices is attested to by the treatise of Hugh of Clers on the seneschalship of France, written in about 1158 to put forward the claims of Henry II of England, all bogus, to the office and insisting that he be given the highest honours at the French court. This is a far cry from the domination of the court by the Garlande family 40 years before.

The office of seneschal was occupied by Ralph, count of Vermandois, and then by Theobald, count of Blois, in the later years of Louis VII, but was suppressed in 1191. Having been held by Hugh of Champfleury from 1150 to 1172, the chancellor's office was left vacant from 1172 to 1179 and 1185 to 1223 – and then filled in 1223–7 by Warin, bishop of Senlis, before being quashed again.

As the royal administration grew in complexity, the kings drew increasingly on men of modest birth to carry out routine administrative tasks. These were normally clerks who made their way in the royal service. Known as *curiales*, court officials, they served in the royal chancery as notaries and scribes and had access to livings in the royal gift. Many were attached to the royal chapels which the Capetians founded or refounded in abundance during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Under Philip Augustus their importance increased and one family from

this background – La Chapelle – became the king's close advisers. By the late twelfth century burgesses also began to appear as counsellors to the king.

Guibert of Nogent described such new royal administrators as low fellows, and Aubri of Trois-Fontaines portrayed Walter, chamberlain at the end of Louis VII's reign, as more noble in deeds than birth. But such men, usually clerics, raised up by the king and holding no specific offices, did not pose the same kind of challenge to the crown as had the great castellans or the newly but lavishly enriched knightly families. They were part of a new and slowly expanding royal administration.

In the early years of the reign of Philip Augustus, the young king was under the influence first of Count Philip of Flanders and then Count Henry of Champagne; later such princes had less direct importance. Philip left vacant the role of chancellor from 1185 and that of seneschal from 1191. In 1200 Giles of Paris complained that the king was inclined to take counsel only from the few men he tolerated in his court, but whilst there were limited opportunities for princes to act as close advisers of the king, still the great dukes, counts and bishops continued to return to court regularly on important occasions to act as the king's counsellors in the more formal sense.

The work of administration was as before discharged by the royal clerks and chamberlains, and by 1213 a group of these men had emerged as the king's close counsellors: Walter the Younger, the chamberlain, whose family was of humble origins; Bartholomew of Roye and Henry Clément, both royal knights; and Warin, a king's clerk and Knight Hospitaller, and bishop of Senlis from 1213. The last is said to have remained constantly by the king's side and was his principal adviser in the later part of the reign, serving also his son Louis VIII as chancellor.

Considerable progress on the machinery of the royal administration was made by these royal servants. From Philip's reign comes the first surviving royal account; the first full lists of royal domain rights and military service; the setting up of a central royal archive; the compilation of registers of royal documents. Much of the impetus for this seems to have come from the disastrous loss of the royal baggage train and archives to Richard I at the battle of Fréteval in 1194: the chamberlain Walter was given the task of reconstructing the missing records (Source 4.5).

SOURCE 4.5 REGISTER OF PHILIP AUGUSTUS, 1212

From the early thirteenth century, records from the central royal administration begin to survive in greater numbers, giving us a much better sense of how this administration worked. Amongst them are the Registers, a set of manuscripts with very varied contents, reflecting the diversity of business at the royal court. This page (fol. 3v) comes from 'Register C', a manuscript begun in 1212 and updated with further information until 1220, now stored in the French National archives as JJ7. The page preserves official reports from December 1213 on three fortifications in the Auvergne (Nonette, Tournoël and Riom) recently captured by royal forces. The reports provide details of

their provisions and equipment: Tournoël for instance had in its stores twelve salted pigs, one barrel of wine, dozens of crossbows, four axes and six hammers, amongst other items. At the bottom, written by a different notary, are two lists of guarantors for entirely separate legal cases; one has been struck out, perhaps because the obligations had been met.

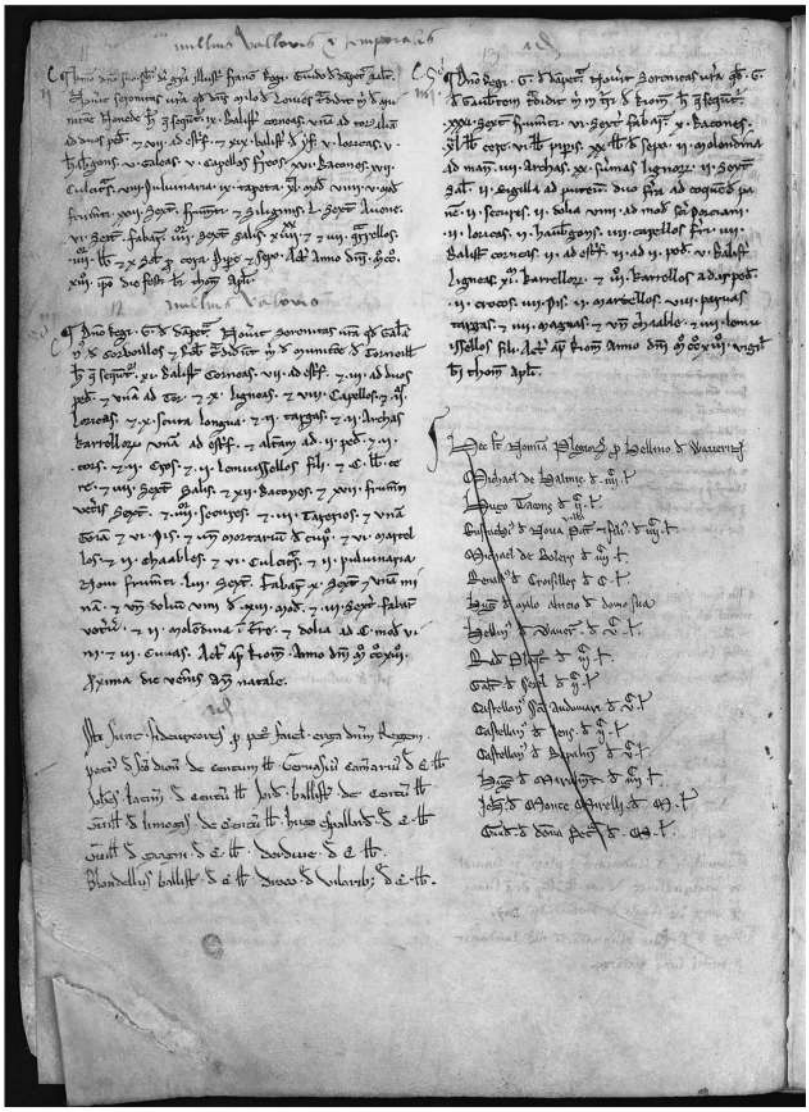

IMAGE 4.10 Register of Philip Augustus, 1212

Archives Nationales, JJ 7, f.3

The royal charter, the basic instrument of government, shows a far greater degree of sophistication and uniformity, perhaps under English influence. Some of these developments, such as the emergence of the system of royal accounting, may have taken place over a far longer period of time, but the 1190s still emerges as a period of great progress and innovation. This was seen by Baldwin as the 'decisive decade', which shifted the balance of power between the Capetians and the Plantagenets before the French conquest of Normandy.[126]

Communal privileges and royal defence

The establishment of order in the royal principality and the extension of the royal domain considerably increased the resources of the crown. The Île-de-France and surrounding areas were probably the wealthiest in France, and by the early thirteenth century provided an impressive financial as well as political base for the French king. But faced by almost continuous and increasingly expensive warfare, the Capetians sought new means to exploit the domain and to harness and increase their wealth, power and influence.

One such was to support and encourage the development of franchises, economic, fiscal and political, often in return for a fixed payment or rights. Royal initiatives paralleled those of many other great lords, ecclesiastical and lay, who willingly granted privileges or franchises to urban and rural communities during the course of the twelfth century – or conceded them in response to force.

In the countryside, the king encouraged land clearance and the foundation of rural franchises and communes. The customs of Lorris in the Gâtinais, given by Louis VI to this village and confirmed by Louis VII in 1155, proved to be a blueprint for similar rural settlements made later on, giving the peasants considerable autonomy but reserving justice and its revenues for the king.[127] The grant gave the inhabitants of the village the status of free men and all the colonisers a licence to 'assart', or clear the land for cultivation. Serfs from other settlements who remained in the village for a year and a day also earned their freedom.

Each man could sell his own produce and the community was exempted from service with the royal army, from paying tallage, aid and a variety of other taxes and dues – although an exception was made in the case of carrying wine, corn and wood for the king, which had to be performed once a year. In return the king was owed six pence for each house and parcel of land paid annually, and the community was subject to royal justice. In Louis VI's reign the customs were granted to La Chapelle-la-Reine and Moulinet as well as to Lorris, whilst under Louis VII they went to a considerable number of new and existing communities. Other villages were exempted from paying taxes and dues that were a burden on their inhabitants but difficult to collect.

Louis VI and Louis VII were keen to stimulate commerce in the towns as well as in the countryside, making many grants of the right to hold fairs and markets. Louis VII allowed these to take place in Poissy, Senlis, Meulan and other centres. Other urban settlements profited from exemptions from certain dues and tolls to attract trade, in return for a fixed payment, as at Compiègne in 1179. Individual burgesses could be brought into these franchises at the king's will; the earliest

surviving example of this is for 1153, when Louis VII admitted Ernoul Perel into the enfranchised community at Orléans.

Some associations achieved the coveted status of a commune, which had the power to regulate its own affairs. In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries this was an association of burgesses or villagers bound by oath which would assert rights and privileges against its overlord. By the end of the twelfth century the status of a commune bound by oath increasingly depended on a charter granted to it by its lord that gave it legal validity.[128] Key towns in the royal principality, such as Paris and Orléans, were allowed franchises but not the full political independence of a commune, although Louis VI allowed a commune at Dreux and Louis VII another at Senlis. Outside the domain the kings often encouraged communal movements, often to the disadvantage of bishops or abbots, as with Louis VI at Soissons, Noyon and Corbie, and Louis VII at Mantes, Beauvais and Compiègne.

The relationship of the kings with the Laon commune is a good example of royal power-building as well as an extreme example of the violence endemic in the Île-de-France in the early twelfth century: the birth of the commune brought with it scenes of unprecedented destruction. This city occupies an important strategic position on two hills that dominate the surrounding area. One contains the more ancient settlement, a pre-Roman and Roman fortified town, a Carolingian capital, with the cathedral, episcopal palace and ancient royal palace; parts of the surviving city walls date back to the tenth century. Within the ramparts were the ancient abbey of Saint-Jean and a considerable number of churches as well as the ecclesiastical buildings around the cathedral.[129]

The townspeople of this prosperous royal city, supported by Louis VI, formed their commune in an attempt to escape from the arbitrary and onerous control of Waldric (or Gaudri) their bishop, formerly the chancellor to Henry I of England. In 1111 their association was confirmed by the bishop's representatives and by the king, in Waldric's absence, evoking strong criticisms from Guibert of Nogent. He described it as a new and evil arrangement, constituting a promise of mutual assistance signed between clergy, city leaders and people, and exempting serfs from most forms of taxation.[130]

On his return to Laon in 1112, Waldric redoubled his fiscal demands and revoked his agreement to the commune, now purchasing support from Louis VI for this course of action. Pitched battles broke out in the streets of the city between his supporters and groups of burgesses, and the cathedral and many houses were burned down. Waldric and a number of nobles were killed, and the commune then called on the notorious castellan Thomas of Marle for support. Guibert commented that 'the people of Laon do more abominable deeds than the people in all the other provinces of France'.[131]

After more than a decade of continuing tensions, in 1128 a commune was eventually constituted officially in the city of Laon and confirmed by both bishop Bartholomew of Jur and the king. This granted the burgesses legal and fiscal privileges – which were through various vicissitudes to survive up to the early fourteenth century. The city now flourished as a centre of trade. The cathedral was entirely reconstructed in the new Gothic style and royal chapels were endowed

and built by Louis VII and his successors (Images 4.11 and 4.12). Laon's strategic location also ensured continuing royal interest: Philip Augustus reconstructed the walls and fortified the bourg on the second hill.

IMAGE 4.11 The city of Laon in the seventeenth century

From C. Chastillon, *Topographie Françoise ou représentations de plusiers villes, bourgs, chasteaux . . . . de France* (Paris, 1655), no. 52

IMAGE 4.12 The city of Laon today

© Pline

Philip gave strong encouragement to communal movements which served his interests. In the royal lands, Étampes lost its charter but Chaumont, Pontoise, Poissy and Montreuil gained them. Outside this area he confirmed many of the communes founded by the counts of Amiens and Ponthieu, and by the Plantagenets. He also created new communes – in the Vexin, in Normandy at Les Andelys and Nonancourt, and in Picardy in places including Crépy-en-Valois and Péronne – to gain the loyalty of the burgesses in these areas. In Normandy he had merely to confirm and extend liberties on the pattern of the *Établissements de Rouen*, a set of privileges granted by the Plantagenets. In Artois, Vermandois and Valois he took the initiative. Such grants of communal privileges built political support and were often of considerable financial value to the king; many of Philip's charters to communes stipulate that a substantial rent be paid in return.

Certain towns had important military functions. A number of fortified towns on the borders of the royal lands with Normandy and Flanders were given full communal privileges, a recognition of their strategic importance, and were required to give military service. Whilst he was willing to accept monetary aid instead of contingents of troops from many towns, Philip was careful to maintain the urban militia in areas where it was needed. In 1188 the communal troops of Mantes held out bravely against Henry II, an illustration of the effectiveness of this approach.[132]

Philip Augustus differed both from the Plantagenet kings and from his Capetian forebears in abandoning as unrealistic royal claims to control all fortifications within the realm. Instead he concentrated his efforts upon those fortifications he could control by consent and exercise of seigneurial authority. He was also an active builder of castles for military, strategic and symbolic purposes, incurring substantial costs. His characteristic circular stone towers or *donjons* were set down on newly acquired domains, often in a position to oversee the existing town or castle, as a stamp of royal authority and a base for tax collection.[133]

Bands of mercenary soldiers had been deployed on a large scale by Henry II and his sons against Louis VII, and Philip Augustus began soon after his accession to build up specialist mercenary corps that soon became a vitally important part of the French army. Like the Plantagenets, he employed not only individual stipendiary soldiers but also whole companies of mercenaries. These normally originated either from outside the French kingdom (e.g., Navarre or Germany) or, more frequently, from the Flanders, Hainault and Brabant region, on account of which they were often called Brabançons.

Mercenaries enjoyed a fearsome reputation for their skill on the battlefield and their violence in plundering and burning off it. Some of their captains, such as Richard I's Mercadier, built up positions of considerable power. Cadoc, for example, was a mercenary leader both trusted and rewarded by Philip Augustus; he defended Gaillon against Richard I in 1195 and subsequently became its castellan, holding in addition the Norman fief of Tosny. Later he became *bailli* of Pont-Audemer.[134]

Besides deploying mercenaries, Philip continued to rely heavily on feudal contingents and dues for his armies. In 1194 he commissioned a full list of military service due to him from the *prévôtés*, towns, villages, communes and abbeys of the

royal domain, a document known as the *prisée des sergéants*. The service is assessed in terms of soldiers and baggage carts. The former total 7,695, the latter 168, and an additional sum of £16,463 *parisis* is due from 15 towns as the charge for commuted services.[135] Not all the communities had to pay service simply in a given number of men: two towns, Arras and Beauvais, were allowed the alternatives of furnishing a contingent or paying a subsidy; others, including Orléans, Étampes, Paris and Bourges, were assessed just for the subsidy. The money thus due totalled about £12,000 *parisis*.

By 1202–3, a year for which the first surviving royal account is extant, these subsidies had been extended further. The going rate appears to have been £3 for a soldier and about £13.10*s* for each wagon per quarter. The account also reveals considerable expenditure by the king on stipendiary troops: heavy knights, mounted sergeants who formed a light cavalry force, mounted archers and foot-soldiers, as well as the troops of mercenaries employed by their own commanders. Many of these stipendiary soldiers were hired on long contracts, and they were paid by the local royal *bailli* or *prévôt*.

The royal principality and the domain to c.1200

In building an effective power base from which to operate, Louis VI and Louis VII built on the legacy of their predecessors. Louis VI made considerable headway with the subjugation and consolidation of the royal principality. During the eleventh century the king's authority had made only slow gains against the castellans of the Île-de-France; not until Prince Louis, later Louis VI, began systematically to attempt to reduce the more powerful amongst them did royal authority show signs of recovery. Louis VI continued this work as king, and as a result of his campaigns against Hugh of Le Puiset, Thomas of Marle and other nobles, royal rights were gradually asserted more effectively within the principality. The political domination of the Montlhéry-Rochefort and the Garlande families in the household was also broken. Louis VII sustained these gains in the face of major provocation from the Plantagenets.

The kings were helped greatly in this recovery by social developments in the principality, for the fortunes of many of the castellans in the area were beginning to decline. Many noble estates were divided on the deaths of their holders, the heirs taking them *in pariage*, a custom of the area. The eldest son retained the most substantial portion and overall lordship, the younger sons were given smaller portions. In 1209 this 'custom' of France was abolished by the king, and gave way in most cases to outright division (although the lords of Montmorency continued to use *pariage*), but both processes resulted in the disintegration of some noble holdings. But from the mid-twelfth century parts of fiefs were frequently sold off to meet cash crises, further weakening some nobles against the newly aggressive monarchy. And the castellans were gradually brought into closer dependence on the king as chains of vassals began to form in the area, culminating in the sovereign.[136]

Louis VI extended the system of *prévôtés* that had appeared in his father's reign. Under him these administrative units were found at Montlhéry and Châteauneuf,

Moret, Samois and Yèvre-le-Châtel, bringing the total to 30 or so. Under Louis VII more *prévôtés* emerged in the Gâtinais and also in outlying areas of domain rights such as Berry, the Mâçonnais, around Nevers and Châlons-sur-Marne. In some important centres the king associated two or more of these officials; in 1154 he appointed three in Paris, the *prévôté* that reverted to him from the Riche family; and two at Bourges, Étampes, Sens and Orléans. In Senlis and Compiègne, however, these officials were suspended in favour of the communes.

Under Philip Augustus more *prévôtés* again appeared, bringing the total number to 62 in the period before the conquest of Normandy. Some already existed in lands acquired by the king, such as Issoudun, Graçay and Meulan. But by the end of the twelfth century a new kind of royal administrator had also begun to appear, the *bailli*. Philip first deployed them as early as 1184.[137] At first these were itinerant officials with judicial and financial functions sent out in groups of three or four by the king on temporary missions, to hold inquests and assizes. They had many similarities with, and were probably based on, Henry II of England's itinerant justices.

By the end of Philip Augustus's reign they held authority in given areas, and this probably developed from their financial functions. They supervised groups of *prévôtés*, heard appeals from their courts, and took over many of their sources of revenues, and, in addition to this, levied regalian rights, tallage, scutage and forest dues on the king's behalf. *Baillis*, with specific areas of jurisdiction, *bailliages*, already existed in Normandy before Philip's conquest, and the king extended their local powers when he suppressed the office of seneschal in the duchy; indeed their introduction on a large scale into the royal principality had taken place in the 1190s when the royal seneschal's office was suppressed. The seneschals of the Languedoc were not, however, replaced.

But what of the royal domain, the resources of the monarchy? Louis VI increased this to some extent, and his major gains were summed up by the continuator of Aimon. 'From Fulk, viscount of Gâtinais, he bought Moret and Le-Châtelet-en-Brie, Boësses, Yèvre-le-Châtel and Chambon. And he also acquired Montlhéry and Châteaufort.'[138] Furthermore he took Chevreuse and Corbeil and, to the south, Meung-sur-Loire, Châteaurenard and Saint-Brisson. Louis VII made both losses and gains.[139] He returned to the monks of Saint-Denis a castle at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, built on the lands of the abbey – although probably all he lost in effect was the burden of its upkeep. Other alienations were made early in his reign, but later on he gained much more in small parcels. These included parts of Le Moulinet, Lorrez-le-Bocage and Préaux and a number of vills, some held in *pariage*, as were also the great estates of Bichereaux and Flagy.[140]

The geographical extent of the recorded royal domain under Louis VII widened – in Burgundy, with the gains of Saint-Pierre-le-Moutier, Tournus and other land following the royal campaigns in the area; in the Sens, Bourges and Orléans areas; and to the north with the acquisition of lands between Chaumont-en-Vexin and Mantes. The ecclesiastical domain widened somewhat: Louis VI gained control of the bishopric of Arras and Louis VII of Autun, Mende and Agde. The number of royal monasteries also increased.[141] By virtue of his marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine

Louis VII held the duchy from 1137 until 1152. Quite unnecessarily, he styled himself as duke of Aquitaine: these lands were never viewed as forming part of the royal lands. He gave the Norman Vexin to his daughter Margaret as a dowry when she married the young king, Henry II's son, in 1160, and to his own brother Robert he granted Dreux.

In the first 20 years of his reign Philip Augustus also made a number of important acquisitions. In 1183 he intervened in the Flemish succession and in 1185 by the Treaty of Boves took the counties of Amiens and Montdidier, the castellanies of Roye, Choisy-au-Bac and Thourotte, and rights of succession to Vermandois and Valois, which in fact came to him in 1213. In 1191 Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders, died in the Holy Land and the king took Artois with Boulonnois and Ternois on behalf of Louis, his own infant son, whose mother, Isabella of Hainault, had been an heiress of the Flemish count. These areas did not become part of the royal lands until 1223 when Louis VIII became king; meanwhile Philip maintained firm control over them.

Philip also acquired other towns and counties for himself, as when after 1184 he was granted Montargis by Peter of Courtenai, and when in 1187 he took over the county of Tournai from the bishop. He also confiscated the county of Meulan from Robert IV, ally of the Plantagenets. From Richard I, too, he gained some castles and lands. Having taken Gisors in 1193 and Évreux, Vaudreuil and Neubourg in 1194, by 1196 he also held Vernon, Gaillon, Paçy-sur-Eure, Ivry and Nonancourt. Nevertheless by 1198 he was prepared to relinquish all these save Gisors, and he was also facing challenges to his gains in Berry and Flanders. Richard I's death in 1199 allowed Philip to retain his former conquests, and in 1200 he took Évreux and Issoudun. These important lands were sacrificed by John as the price of Philip's support, enabling the French king to consolidate his gains in northern France. This increase was as nothing compared with the conquests after 1204, which radically altered the whole balance of power in the French kingdom.

A valuable list of towns and castles in the king's domain appears in the first register of Philip Augustus, taken after these conquests.[142] This was drawn up in about 1204–6 and gives a clear idea of the geographical extent of the major centres now held by the king and the nature of his rights in each. Philip had domainial rights in 32 towns and well over 100 castles. In the list of towns, it is clearly specified whether the king had the right of procuration, military service or regalia, or two, or all three of these. The list of the archbishops, bishops and abbots of the whole kingdom that follows shows that the king controlled a substantial proportion of these.

These lists, and the great catalogue of royal vassals that follows, give a valuable overview of royal rights following the collapse of the power of the English king in France, and show the extent to which they had been augmented by Philip's conquests. Philip was further to expand his power in Vermandois, Valois, Clermont-en-Beauvaisis, Beaumont-sur-Oise, Alençon and Nogent; and Louis VIII in Poitou, at Saint-Riquier and Doullens, Perche, at Beaucaire and Carcassonne.

Other new ways were found to tap the wealth of the royal principality and of the kingdom during the twelfth century. Feudal aids began to emerge as an important source of revenue; the first recorded was levied in 1137 to cover the expenses of the future Louis VII when he went to Aquitaine to marry Eleanor. Louis VII levied another in 1147 to help to pay for his crusade, and this marks an extension of the incidents under which the tax could be raised and the co-operation of pope and king in the extraction of wealth from the French church. In 1188 Philip Augustus levied the Saladin tithe to finance his crusade, but met with so marked an opposition from the clergy that he was forced to halt its collection.

Fighting the Plantagenets was an expensive business, and in the 1180s and 1190s Philip's need for funds became acute. The Jewish community in the royal domain suffered the seizure of lands and heavy mulcting, marking the start of more than a century of persecution and uncertainty (pp. 298, 376).[143] A thousand marks was extracted by Philip from Saint-Denis in 1186, and in 1194 the king plundered the churches under Richard I's protection and raised considerable sums as well as marked hostility. Even in accounts as generally favourable to the king as Rigord's, opposition to Philip's depredations in the royal principality emerges clearly, as he put his lands on a war footing.

The principalities to c.1200: Blois, Champagne, Burgundy, Flanders, Toulouse

The twelfth century saw not just the expansion of royal power within the kingdom but also the political consolidation of the principalities. As in the royal lands, the princes gradually imposed law and order, brought the castellans to heel, and strengthened their administrations. Tenurial hierarchies began to form. Some states, such as Normandy and Flanders, were already relatively well organised; in others, Champagne, Blois, Anjou, Toulouse, Aquitaine and Burgundy, this process took place with a varying degree of speed. The collection of principalities built up by Henry II and his sons blurred the administrative distinctions between Normandy, Anjou and Maine and Aquitaine to some minor extent, but these states were similarly in the process of developing their own distinctive customs and laws.

The princes promulgated ordinances in their lands, as when Charles the Good instituted the public peace in Flanders between 1119 and 1127; when in about 1178 Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders, regulated the *bailliages* in his lands by ordinance; and when in 1185 Duke Geoffrey laid down the rules for noble inheritance in Brittany. Assemblies, which may be seen as the forerunners of the provincial estates of the fourteenth century (pp. 402–404), met to sanction princely decisions, and princely courts such as the exchequer in Normandy or later the *Grands Jours* in Champagne had a growing competence to decide tenurial and other matters. The princely households, like the royal household, contained lesser functionaries, often of humble birth, as well as nobles who from time to time counselled the prince. Princely finances were developed: Flanders and Normandy were precocious, as the Flemish accounts for 1187 and the Norman exchequer rolls demonstrate. In many

cases the princes continued to control the church in their lands, although here the many independent monastic houses and the limited regalian powers of the dukes of Burgundy, for example, formed a contrast to the Norman prelates, who were firmly under the authority of the dukes.

These changes, at this stage in part theoretical, were to become of the greatest practical importance in tipping the balance between the king and the princes in the thirteenth century, but in the reigns of Louis VI and Louis VII, when the power of the counts of Flanders and Champagne was considerable, and that of the Anglo-Norman and Plantagenet kings of England eclipsed that of the French crown, they had an often-limited impact. As in the later eleventh century, the king continued to make and break alliances with his neighbours, and to receive service from his allies and not his enemies. Not until the reign of Philip Augustus was the crown fully able to realise the potential of the changes that had occurred.

For example, in the early twelfth century the counts of Flanders had had fairly close ties with the French monarchy.[144] Robert II is said by Suger to have sent 4,000 knights to serve the king in 1109, and both he and Baldwin VII were killed whilst fighting for Louis VI. Both seem to have paid homage for Flanders. Charles the Good also campaigned with Louis. It has frequently been claimed that the king's intervention in the county after Charles's assassination in 1127 was a new departure, a sign of new royal aggression inside a principality, and it is true that Louis VI did not have to be called upon to interfere with the succession; instead he intervened directly. Still, Philip I had also meddled with the Flemish succession in 1070–1, having been summoned by both parties, and he had had an equal lack of success in imposing his own candidate.

Our sources suggest that Thierry and Philip of Alsace, the next counts, were vassals of the French king, and that Baldwin VIII, who after a succession dispute followed Philip as count in 1192, was obliged to pay the king, his liege lord, 5,000 silver marks as a relief and to contribute a large force for the siege of Rouen in 1193. Baldwin IX went further. In 1196 he promised to submit to the judgement of the royal court if a disagreement arose between him and the king. But all these ties did not prevent him from allying with Richard I against Philip in the next few years and from invading his lands, just as having paid homage to Philip Augustus did not stop Ferrand, his successor, from allying with John and the emperor and from fighting the king at Bouvines. Yet the legal ties between the French kings and the Flemish counts were clearly understood throughout the twelfth century, even if they were often meaningless in practice. When allying with the English kings against the French, as in 1109 and 1163, the counts of Flanders still reserved their ultimate allegiance for the Capetians.

Like Flanders, both Burgundy and Champagne were drawn into closer relations with the monarchy, though that did not mean they were always obedient. One source suggests that Hugh II, duke of Burgundy, refused homage to Louis VI in 1108; yet in the following year he certainly fought Henry I of England alongside the king. Burgundy sent further contingents to the royal army in 1119 and 1124, and Duke Odo II was judged and condemned by the royal court for his

depredations of the estates of the bishopric of Langres in 1153. Although his son Hugh III recognised the king as his liege lord, he still fought the Capetians in alliance with the emperor. In 1186 Philip Augustus mounted a punitive expedition against him, using as an excuse the complaints made by the lord of Vergy, one of the duke's most recalcitrant vassals; and he brought the duke to heel. After this the rulers of the duchy were more closely aligned with and obedient to the king.

The counts of Blois and Champagne maintained an independent line against the king early in the twelfth century. Stephen-Henry had been imprisoned by Philip I and compelled to pay homage. Theobald II was a constant foe of the French kings, and although he sent a contingent against the emperor in 1124, after this his hostility remained unabated until the 1140s. Later on better relations were established, reinforced with a strong family alliance: Louis VII married Theobald II's sister, Adela, and Count Henry the Liberal and Theobald his brother married the two daughters of Louis and Eleanor of Aquitaine. In 1152 Henry the Liberal joined an expedition against Henry Plantagenet, and he also recognised the competence of the royal court.

Yet that did not entirely curtail the count's political options. Champagne bordered on the empire, and Henry – whose mother was the German-speaking Matilda of Carinthia – retained long-standing connections with the east. In 1162 he was the natural broker between Louis VII and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa leading to the meeting at Saint-Jean-de-Losne, and in the course of these negotiations he even threatened to transfer the lands he held from the king to Frederick. His son Theobald III maintained this independence vis-à-vis the French crown, for instance supporting Richard I against Philip Augustus in 1198, though in the same year he did Philip liege homage for all his lands. The early death of Theobald III in 1201, the regency of Blanche of Navarre and the minority of Theobald IV until 1222 weakened the principality, and gave the kings a useful freedom of manoeuvre during crucial decades.

The principalities of southern France had far weaker connections with the French crown than their northern counterparts, but here too a gradual extension of royal authority was visible. The exception was Barcelona, which, although claimed by the Capetians until 1258, had by the middle of the twelfth century drifted off into the orbit of the kingdom of Aragon.

In Aquitaine, William IX was fairly hostile to the French crown, and in 1124 he failed to send a contingent to fight the emperor. However, he did not do battle with Louis VI when the king intervened in the Auvergne in 1126, because the king was his overlord; and although the count of Clermont was his vassal and not the king's, and Louis was technically in the wrong, still he agreed that the count should be presented to the king for the judgement of the royal court. Later on, however, both he and his son William X fought Louis openly, observing no such restraint.

It is worth noting that even though William IX had conceded that he held the duchy from the French king, Louis VII styled himself as duke of Aquitaine as well as king of France when controlling Aquitaine as Eleanor's husband. Henry II did likewise. Both he and Richard I strongly pursued Eleanor's claims to Toulouse

against the French kings, with the additional involvement of Aragon and Navarre: Richard's marriage in 1191 to Berengaria of Navarre was intended to secure his southern borders. Some four decades of sporadic but often violent warfare ended only in 1196 with the nuptials of Richard's widowed sister Joan to Raymond VI, count of Toulouse.[145]

The principalities of the west and south: was there an 'Angevin empire'?

The 'Angevin empire', says Gillingham, may be defined as the 'assemblage of lands held by the family of the counts of Anjou (the Angevins) in the 80 years or so after 1144'. The term was invented by Kate Norgate in the late nineteenth century and has gained wide currency since, although many historians, particularly in France, prefer the term 'Plantagenet' to 'Angevin', a label they instead apply to the descendants of Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX (p. 335).[146]

The term Plantagenet is based on the nickname given by contemporaries to Geoffrey count of Anjou, Henry II's father, for the sprig of broom he wore in his hat but was not used as the name for the dynasty until the nineteenth century. The term empire was also very rarely used by contemporaries in this context (although it was for the German and Byzantine empires).[147] Convenient and durable shorthand though they have proved to be, the terms 'Angevin empire' or 'Plantagenet dominions', or variants, need rather to be seen as modern constructs than as reflecting contemporary notions or realities.[148]

Boussard, who defined the 'Angevin empire' as a very strong state in a feudal framework, saw the lands as forming a conceptual, administrative and geographical whole.[149] The geographical view is the most striking: on the map, the lands of Henry II and Richard I appear as an elegant bloc stretching from Northumberland to the Pyrenees, focussed around important towns, great rivers and the English channel, bordered by natural defences such as ranges of hills and inaccessible tracts of undeveloped lands or with heavily fortified strongholds – although with a number of weak points, particularly Aquitaine and the Vexin.

At the centre of the Plantagenet lands, England and Normandy were held together by powerful ties of landholding and by the aspirations of their shared political élite, exercising hard power – and which Bates rightly sees as imperial in its ethos.[150] There is value, too, in the notion of a 'feudal empire' encompassing the wider Plantagenet dominions, as propounded by Madeline, founded on an affirmation of the dynasty's royal power and with strong borders defended by castles.[151]

But despite innovations in the governance of them all, the underlying political and administrative unity of these lands is less easy to discern. Boussard adduced as proof of its administrative coherence the measures promulgated by Henry II in several or all of its component parts. Examples are the Norman inquest of 1171, similar to the English Inquest of Sheriffs in 1170; the edict of 1177 dealing with debts that took effect in Normandy, Anjou, Aquitaine and Brittany; and the Assize of Arms of 1181, which appeared both in England and in Henry's French lands.

There are other rather less clear-cut examples but, all in all, such measures were usually restricted to England and Normandy and were very much the exception rather than the rule.

So too was the movement of officials from one area to another, as when Richard of Ilchester, an Englishman, overhauled the Norman exchequer in the 1170s; for although a number of royal officials from one region took office at the highest level in another, this was in part a result of the operation of royal patronage, the rewarding of a *curialis* with whatever office was available at a given time and, in part, an attempt to use expertise from one part of the king's lands in another. Certainly, there are no signs of plans for creating a centralised administration throughout the Plantagenet lands. Indeed, most of the posts in each area were filled by local men. Richard I held councils to draw together the leading men in his French territories only rarely, and drew his companions and counsellors from Normandy, Poitou and England rather than from Anjou, Aquitaine and Gascony.

There is no substance in the idea that contemporaries viewed the Plantagenet lands *en masse* as an empire, in the sense of a single political unit. Henry II and Richard I each styled himself as king of England, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine and count of Anjou. Richard I is credited with schemes of power and grandeur on a vast scale, of ambitions in the Near East and Italy, but no chronicler and no royal act ever described him as 'emperor' in any territorial context.

Nor, tellingly, was the collection of lands gathered by Geoffrey the Fair, Henry II and Richard I ever regarded as an entity that must be kept together. On the contrary, the dispositions of each ruler are a clear indication of their own view of their lands, as a collection of holdings, a kingdom, two duchies, counties, lordships, an unwieldy and cumbersome collection that should naturally have been divided between their heirs in the tradition of the French princes. But on each occasion the practical and normal principle of division was disregarded and one man took all the lands by force. This interference with the ordained course of events disguises the intentions of the rulers and imposes a retrospective unity on the lands.[152]

Thus, Geoffrey the Fair reversed the normal inheritance pattern whereby the eldest son should take the patrimony and younger sons the acquisitions. In 1151 he laid down that Henry was to have his mother's land of Normandy, but that once he had acquired England he should pass Maine and Anjou to his brother Geoffrey. Henry, who had also gained Aquitaine in 1152, kept them, and Geoffrey, who died in 1158, had to accept no more than the county of Nantes.

Henry II also envisaged a division of his lands. In 1169 he laid down that the Young King Henry was to inherit England and Normandy, Maine and Anjou, which had passed to Henry from his parents. Richard was to have Aquitaine, and Geoffrey, Brittany by virtue of his marriage to Constance. Louis VII confirmed this arrangement, but in 1183 the Young King died and despite Henry II's instructions to do so, Richard refused to relinquish Aquitaine to John. Thus he again took all his father's lands. In 1191, however, he made an agreement at Messina with Philip Augustus that if he had two sons the second would take Normandy, or greater Anjou, or Aquitaine, and that he should hold it directly from the French king.[153]

But he had no sons, and on his death there was a further difficulty: was John or Arthur of Brittany his rightful heir, and for which lands? Richard had named John as his heir on his deathbed, but both had strong claims. In the event the matter was settled by practical action. John managed to take England and Normandy, his mother Eleanor held Aquitaine for him and Anjou and Maine followed suit. Arthur had to be content with Brittany for the time being.

It seems more surprising that Henry II's lands were inherited in their entirety by two sons in succession, than that on a number of occasions it was intended that they should be divided. For they were a diverse collection – a kingdom and a number of French principalities – each with its own history, identity and customs. As Warren said, 'in so far as the "empire" can be said to have any unity at all, it was a unity which rested solely in Henry's peripatetic court and household'.[154] Turner and Heiser describe it as in some respects 'hegemonic rather than territorial, [a system of] indirect exploitation of acquired lands without displacing entirely local or regional lords'.[155]

Despite the links of family, landholding, and patronage between the component parts, which were strongest in the case of Normandy and England, each French principality continued to have its own identity under Plantagenet rule, which differed in style and extent in each. In Normandy, where ducal authority was strong, Henry II developed the administration and all legal and customary revenues. Anjou, Maine and Touraine were secured largely through alliances with vassals backed up by force when required. In Aquitaine and Gascony, ducal authority depended on aggression and pacts with local leaders, and was often a source of resentment. Toulouse, regarded by the Plantagenets as a dependency of Aquitaine, was as much a source of dispute with the Capetians in the south as the Vexin on the Norman border in the north of their French lands.[156]

Indeed, both the Plantagenets as princes and their leading men in each component state recognised that these lands were firmly located within the kingdom of France, to whose king mutually accepted duties and obligations were due. These included homage, performed by their heirs and eventually by themselves in person. By the 1180s and 1190s there were also some signs of a rift between England and Normandy, the most closely connected components of the Plantagenet lands. Resentment grew against the successful revenue-raising activities of the Plantagenet dukes, seen increasingly as tyrannical and oppressive.[157] There was increasing differentiation between English and Norman business on the exchequer rolls, and in diverging laws and inheritance customs.

There was also a growing awareness of the differences between the 'English' and the 'French', of separate cultural traditions epitomised by the 'barbarous' French spoken in England, mocked by Walter Map as the French of Marlborough.[158] Henry II had had to use his authority over the succession of fees to prevent the English and the Norman parts of many cross-channel baronies from being split, and the closeness of the Anglo-Norman links under Henry I had not been re-established.

The differences between the various parts of the Plantagenet lands were arguably clearer at the end of the twelfth century than they had been in the middle.

Yet, particularly given the strength of the bonds between Normandy and England, this is still not sufficient to explain the collapse of the English king's French dominions between 1199 and 1204.

With the benefit of hindsight, Philip Augustus's conquests at the expense of the Plantagenet kings may seem inevitable, the result of longterm underlying factors, social, economic and political, and by an apparent tightening of the bonds of overlordship, that were inexorably leading towards the capture of these lands by the French kings. But whilst Philip's authority had increased to some degree by 1199 there was no clear indication at all that the power of the English king was on the verge of total breakdown. If anything, the contrary was true, for by 1199 Philip Augustus had lost many of his earlier gains in Normandy and Picardy. That he managed to reverse these setbacks in such a dramatic way seems to stem primarily from the events following the death of Richard I. The personal incompetence and weakness of Richard's successor John of England was readily exploited by the Capetian king, who brought to bear his own great abilities as a tactician and leader. Personal and political factors were the key determinants of the dramatic reversal of power within the French kingdom.

Royal resources: Capetians versus Plantagenets

Contemporaries believed that the Plantagenets were wealthier than the Capetians in the second half of the twelfth century. Louis VII's declaration to Walter Map that the king of England lacked for nothing, but that in France they only had bread, wine and good cheer is well known, and Map himself said that it was true. Gerald of Wales also commented that the Plantagenets were well resourced:

> one may therefore ask how King Henry II and his sons, in spite of their many wars, possessed so much treasure. The reason is that as their fixed returns yielded less they took care to make up the total by extraordinary levies, relying more on these than on the ordinary sources of revenue.[159]

This lesson was clearly not lost on Philip Augustus, who, according to Rigord, was convinced that his predecessors had lost lands because of their poverty, which prevented them from raising a strong army in time of need. He was not himself willing to accept this situation, and concentrated on increasing his income. The success of his efforts in so doing is attested to by Conan, provost of Lausanne, when recording his conversations with royal officials in Paris during the 1220s. They had told him that Philip Augustus:

> had enriched the kingdom and increased it beyond what can be believed; since although King Louis, his father, did not leave him an income, as the officials of the kingdom used to relate, except for £19,000, he left to Louis, his son, a revenue of £1,200 parisis a day, and (as the said Conan, provost of Lausanne, who was present at the interment, heard from intimates of the

> king and from common report), the said King Philip left in his will from the money he had collected for the aid of the land of Jerusalem, 700,000 marks for the defence of the kingdom of France and for the maintenance of his son, Louis.[160]

Historians of both the Capetians and the Plantagenets have been much exercised with the relative weightings of the financial resources that the two royal houses could deploy one against the other in their epic struggles between 1189 and 1204, which culminated in the conquest of Normandy. Key to this matter is a comparison of the receipts taken by Richard and John from England and Normandy and by Philip from the royal domain; and a related issue is the extent to which financial resources were a significant factor in Philip's great victories over his rivals.

A number of valuable financial sources have survived that supply the evidence for the debate, but they are complex to use and interpret. All discussions of royal resources under Louis VII and Philip Augustus are centred on information from the royal account roll for 1202–3. The original document was lost in the course of the eighteenth century, but not before antiquary Nicholas Brussel had produced an edition of it in 1725.[161] The text is valuable not only for its early date but also because the accounts for all three financial terms of the year, Purification, Ascension and All Saints, have survived, whereas the quite numerous fragments that survive from later on in the thirteenth century often only cover isolated terms. It also demonstrates that the royal finances were operating by a well-established system; indeed, some of the pensions allowed to monasteries go back into Philip's father's reign. In 1170, for example, Louis VII had given the Hôtel-Dieu at Senlis a grant of £10 per annum in perpetuity and this was still being paid in 1202–3.[162]

We know something of how the accounts were rendered from the ordinance drawn up by Philip Augustus when he was preparing to go on crusade in 1190. This details the arrangements for the administration of the kingdom. It specifies that Adam, one of the royal clerks, shall receive all the money due to the king three times a year at the Paris Temple – a custom that was probably already well established by this time. This shall be done in the presence of six burgesses from Paris and, probably, also a member of the royal household. Adam shall keep written accounts of the treasure, which shall be stored in large chests. The Templars and the king's regents shall keep the keys.[163]

The 1202–3 accounts detail receipts and expenditure, and come under the headings of *prévôtés*, *bailliages* and marches (the revenues of and expenditure on the Vexin forts of John occupied by Philip). They represent both the normal receipts of the French kings and the scale of expenditure on the war against the Plantagenets.[164]

On the Plantagenet side the sources are richer still, comprising a full set of pipe rolls for England and an incomplete set for Normandy. By the 1190s the English exchequer had been operational for the best part of a century and the system was well established and for its time sophisticated. But modern attempts to compute the annual revenues of the kings from this source have proved very complex, since

it is by no means clear how much of this money passed straight through the royal chamber rather than through the exchequer where the accounts were drawn up, thus going unrecorded.

The evidence of both the Capetian and Plantagenet sets of accounts has been interpreted in a number of different ways – often contradictory. In the 1930s Lot and Fawtier deduced that if extra war revenues were discounted the ordinary revenues of Philip Augustus still amounted to more than the Plantagenets could raise, and that the French domain yielded more than all the Plantagenet lands put together. They, and many others since, believed that even in the time of Louis VII the royal domain revenues amounted to as much as £228,000 *parisis*.[165] But this figure is in part based on a misreading of the text of Conan of Lausanne; a far more plausible figure is about £20,000 *parisis* a year from the regular income of the domain as calculated by Baldwin for the year 1180, a figure close to that actually suggested in Conan's text.[166]

Proponents of Plantagenet financial superiority see Philip as a David and Goliath figure, whose defeat of a far wealthier John was the product of his own skill and ability and of John's corresponding ineptitude rather than being founded on greater Capetian resources. Petit-Dutaillis and Powicke both saw the Plantagenets as being able to deploy superior resources.[167] Gillingham, whilst accepting that there was a fluctuation in the relative balance of disposable income – for example in 1193–4 Philip clearly had substantially more funds available to him than Richard – also supported this view in general; Plantagenet funds were overall, he suggests, greater.[168]

Holt disagreed with both sides, suggesting a more complex model: whilst the Plantagenets clearly held superior resources under Henry II, in his view the balance tipped strongly away from Richard and in Philip's favour during the 1190s.[169] His thesis has been taken further by the work of Baldwin on the resources of Philip Augustus and of Barratt on the Plantagenets; Barratt has also made a direct comparison of the resources of the two royal houses.

As already noted, Baldwin shows that in 1180 Philip Augustus's receipts from the Capetian domain were some £20,000 *parisis* (at that time about £7,000 sterling). By 1203 he had, through territorial gains and a reconstruction of his financial management systems, increased his annual take to around £115,000 *parisis* (more than £42,000 sterling). But his gross receipts in 1203 amounted to a vastly larger figure of £196,000 *parisis* (approximately £70,000 sterling), the balance deriving from non-regular income including wartime taxation and feudal reliefs.[170]

On the Plantagenet side,[171] in 1180 Henry II could take around £15,000 sterling a year from England, and this level of income was broadly sustained by Richard I up to 1194. But at the start of his reign, Richard alienated land and rights to fund his warfare, decreasing receipts from these core resources. He had therefore, from 1194, to resort to sustained and ever widening forms of extraordinary taxation: carucage, tallage and judicial and feudal revenues. These however enabled him to double his revenue from England to almost £25,000 sterling.[172]

Anjou, Aquitaine and Gascony are unlikely to have made a net contribution to the Plantagenet exchequer. Normandy clearly did however, recorded revenues

having quadrupled to the equivalent of approximately £25,000 sterling between 1180 and 1198 through the use of oppressive and hugely disliked measures. This gave Richard a roughly similar level of receipts to England, bringing his total from both sources to approximately £50,000 sterling.[173] Richard's predatory and oppressive revenue-raising practices were adopted and adapted by John, and were to fuel an increasing baronial mistrust and opposition in both Normandy and England – and a drop in John's English income to some £23,000 sterling.

Barratt concludes that the total revenues of John and Philip Augustus in 1204, on the eve of the conquest of Normandy, were probably broadly similar. If the Capetian revenues were greater, it was by no more than one-fifth, although Philip's revenues came from a smaller area and were far less difficult to collect than John's – and he had a greater surplus to draw on. Thus in the struggle between the Capetians and the Plantagenets, 'finances were no longer a pivotal factor: all depended on the political, diplomatic and military prowess of the ruler'.[174]

The conquest of Normandy was decisive in giving the Capetians a financial advantage, and the establishment of peace in 1214 fostered a surge of prosperity in the royal lands. By 1221 Philip Augustus's annual ordinary income had, according to Baldwin's calculations, jumped to some £200,000 *parisis* (more than £70,000 sterling) a year, a figure based on the surviving accounts for that year but that also ties in with the overall trend, if not the figures, in Conan's anecdote. This enabled the French monarchy to run a major and regular budget surplus with less reliance on extraordinary, often unpopular, taxation. Philip's income was moreover nearly six times Henry III's annual revenue for the same year, a discrepancy that does much to explain the modest efforts of the English merely to consolidate themselves in Gascony in the 1220s, rather than returning to the offensive to regain their lost lands.[175]

Capetian rule in Normandy

Until the treaty of Paris in 1259 the English kings continued to claim Normandy and made some tentative attempts to recapture it. They were hampered by their need to concentrate on holding and defending Gascony and by the increasing unwillingness of their barons to fight overseas. But what real chance did John and Henry III stand of regaining it? How did the strong ties created during well over a century of close association between Normandy and England stand up to the French conquest, and how long did they last? Normandy was a rich prize and Philip was careful to consolidate his power there as thoroughly and as speedily as possible.[176] He had in his own view conquered it legitimately and he would continue to rule lawfully. The Norman bishops, advised by the pope to decide for themselves which king they preferred, wisely chose Philip, and he accepted the homage and fealty of the ecclesiastical as well as the lay magnates.

A critical task for Philip was to break the most important cross-channel ties, those of landholding.[177] For the Anglo-Norman elite, the stakes in 1204 were very high. Philip threatened those Norman landholders who did not make peace with

him with confiscation of their lands, giving them a year to consider their positions. John seized the English estates of the barons whose allegiance rested in Normandy – lands that were to be of considerable importance to the English crown.

The greatest families with lands in Normandy, including the earls of Arundel, Chester, Warenne, Gloucester (and counts of Évreux), were John's counsellors, and most threw in their lot with him. Only the counts of Eu and Alençon opted for the French king, retaining their status in Norman society, and being rewarded with some valuable lands confiscated by Philip from those who had departed. Below this level, around half of the Norman lords opted immediately for Philip, with only a quarter expressing firm allegiance to John. The marcher lords of the Vexin and the Evreçin, no longer able to play off the two rulers, mainly chose to follow Philip. Amongst the lesser tenants and knights, a high proportion became vassals of the crown, and it was this group which was to furnish Philip with many of the administrators he would need to run the duchy.

There were a number of reasons for this significant level of support for Philip. Strong resistance had developed in Normandy to the fiscal oppressions of both John and his predecessor Richard I: Philip was likewise keen to exercise his powers over taxation and justice, but unlike the Plantagenets, was careful to respect the accepted legal rights and customs of the duchy. Moreover, the ties between England and Normandy were already weakening as many leading families in the duchy had begun to disentangle their cross-channel holdings, identifying themselves increasingly as either Norman or English. For those with major estates in Normandy, Philip was the prudent choice. For example, Raoul Taisson, former seneschal of the duchy, sacrificed his lands in Kent and Nottinghamshire but preserved those in Normandy, which were of far greater value. By contrast Walter of Dunstanville, with the balance of his lands in England, decided to stay with John.

The French king did not however wish to provoke undue hostility and did not pursue John's followers with the utmost ruthlessness. A few of the Anglo-Norman barons came to an arrangement with him. William Marshall, for example, agreed to pay homage to him for his Norman lands after a year and a day if Philip would leave his estates unmolested. Other nobles, including several widows, were in the course of time regranted their Norman estates as a mark of special favour. Alice, the countess of Eu in her own right, was allowed to recover her inheritance in 1219 after the death of her husband Raoul of Exoudun, who had defected from Philip to John in 1214. She had to pay heavily for the privilege. There are even a few examples of families who maintained lands on both sides of the channel up to 1259, although most found dual allegiance unsustainable. For example in the 1240s, after 40 years of struggling with this, the Marmions finally disposed of their Norman lands and opted for life in England.

Philip also rewarded some of his own followers – counsellors such as Barthelemy of Roye and military leaders such as Henry Clément. But he added most of the lands confiscated from John's supporters to the ducal, now the royal, domain. These included the lands of the earls of Warenne, Leicester, Arundel and Clare and a number of important towns and fortresses. By not granting these out he also kept

open the options of important former landholders. To document and consolidate his gains, the king also made a thorough investigation of ducal castles, rights and customary revenues. Having additionally abolished the post of seneschal, he split his functions between a number of *baillis* with territorial jurisdictions, his own men, who were answerable to the Norman exchequer.

The shift in the patterns of landholding by the nobility in Normandy was one striking change that came about after 1204. Another was the impact of the conquest on the Norman church, both cathedrals and monasteries, many of which held important and lucrative estates in England, where a similar and gradual disentanglement took place. Between 1204 and 1212, John confiscated the majority of the revenues due to the Norman church for its English lands and rights. Thereafter, some funds began to cross the channel again, including pensions, recorded on the pipe rolls. There was also some interchange of personnel. But despite active measures from the Norman church to sustain these revenues from England, they were increasingly difficult to collect. Up to about 1230, many cathedrals and monasteries, while upholding their titles in theory, in practice exchanged or sold their lands and rights to tithes, rents and pensions. From 1230, as any hope faded for the reinstatement of ties with England, they began to dispose of their lands there.

With the Norman episcopate Philip at first created a favourable impression. John had interfered in the Sées election in 1202–3 and had been threatened by excommunication if he did not accept the cathedral chapter's choice. Philip, by contrast, promised to observe the rights of the church. He called for an inquest into the powers enjoyed by the English kings over the Norman church and a full statement of custom, and this he promised to follow, often interpreting disputed points in a way which was favourable to the church. He also promised free elections; indeed, no sooner had he taken Évreux in 1200 than he issued a charter to this effect, which was confirmed by Pope Innocent III. None of the episcopal elections after 1204 seem to bear the marks of his interference, and the same was probably true for the monasteries.

By the very act of taking over the duchy of Normandy Philip probably doubled the number of monastic houses under his direct control. He seems to have actively fostered links with the Norman monasteries, making a few important gifts and grants of privileges to them after the conquest and continuing and even increasing ducal payments to them. For example, in the Évreçin he allowed £143 *parisis* to monasteries, where Richard had allowed the equivalent of £105 *parisis*.[178] On the other hand, Philip also appears to have mulcted some monasteries after the conquest to reward his followers – or so at least one anonymous chronicler complained. This is one sign of a growing strain: in 1218 Archbishop Robert conceded a number of points at issue to the king, in particular yielding over the right of excommunication of royal officials. Under Louis VIII relations between crown and clergy became more troubled still. In 1224 three Norman bishops refused to pay Louis military service outside the duchy, and the king had to extract a promise from the archbishop of Rouen that he would observe the rights and customs of Normandy.

In his attempts to gain the alliance of the Norman towns Philip was generous. He confirmed almost all the communes that John had created in 1199–1203 as an attempt to build up support and gain extra funds, for the same reasons. Five towns, including Alençon and Barfleur, lost their privileges, whilst Les Andelys and Nonancourt were granted communes. The king allowed certain trading links with England to continue and made special concessions to Caen, Falaise and Rouen. But Rouen lost most of the revenues from its cross-channel trade, and there is evidence that the charter of privileges granted to it in 1207 was an attempt to quell its dissatisfaction with the new regime. Louis VIII was to extract loans from the Norman towns, but overall, they probably suffered less from the conquest than did the nobility and the church.

The rupturing of links, lay and ecclesiastical, which had been sustained over almost two centuries, was emblematic of the demise of the 'Anglo-Norman realm' and would bind Normandy firmly into the Capetian domain.[179] Meanwhile the English crown was finding its recapture an increasingly lost cause. But a certain amount of friction between the king of France's men and the Normans developed: Rigord said that, although Philip Augustus allowed the Normans to enjoy their own customs freely, many were unhappy with his rule. Plantagenet rule even began to be recalled as a time of peace and justice.[180]

Under Louis VIII and Louis IX this rift opened further, as Normans found it increasingly difficult to obtain high office in the church and government of the duchy. But such tensions were not strong enough to enable Henry III to take it back. By breaking many of the important tenurial links that had counted towards uniting England and Normandy in 1100–6 and 1152–4, and by gaining the support of the Norman episcopate, Philip had begun to sever Normandy from England where it really mattered. Commercial and monastic links continued, but these alone were not enough to restore Normandy to the English crown.

The Capetians, the Languedoc and the Albigensian Crusade

The Plantagenet lands were seized by the French king from a disobedient vassal. The implantation of royal power in the Languedoc came about in a very different way: the king was summoned by the pope to take over lands where he was already the suzerain, but where the church rather than the king was leading the drive to dispossess the counts for heresy. A further complicating factor was the link between the counts of Toulouse and the Plantagenets, who had a longstanding claim as overlords of Toulouse through the duchy of Aquitaine.[181] The French king was active as suzerain until 1226, when he was ceded the count's powers as well, but he was also acting as the secular arm of the papacy.

Initially Philip Augustus was unwilling to commit himself in the Languedoc, in part perhaps because of this lack of a defensible legal title, in part because royal resources were not sufficient for an all-out war against the count of Toulouse as well as the king of England; the two could in combination have proved a dangerous coalition. Louis VIII, once he was king, was not ready to enter the fray until he

was assured of the financial support of the church, and of making substantial gains that he would be able to grant out at will.

Pope Innocent III attempted to involve Philip Augustus in the south of France on a number of occasions. In 1204 he wrote to him requesting him to move against the Albigensian heretics, adding that lands confiscated from all the heretics and their supporters would go to the king. Philip was clearly tempted but was too heavily committed against John. Then in 1208 the murder of the papal legate Peter of Castelnau, supposedly by a follower of the already excommunicate Raymond VI, count of Toulouse, turned the pope's request for a crusade into a demand.

Still the king was reluctant to get involved. He reserved his rights as suzerain in the eventuality of Raymond VI's dispossession by the church, and he allowed up to 500 French knights to take the cross; but he left the overall organisation and the control of the crusade to the pope and the Cistercians. A considerable number of nobles from northern and central France, including the duke of Burgundy and the counts of Saint-Pol and Nevers, were involved. Arnold Aimery, abbot of Cîteaux, and Simon de Montfort became their leaders in the field. Raymond VI, count of Toulouse, realising the dangers he faced, submitted to the pope, thus removing the major grounds for the crusade; but by this time it was too late to stop the crusaders. Their conquests were rapid and it was to the pope, not the king, that Simon de Montfort went for recognition of his rights. In 1211 he paid homage to Peter II of Aragon for the lands of the Count of Toulouse.

By 1212, however, Peter of Aragon realised that Simon posed a considerable threat to his own position in the Languedoc, now allying with Raymond VI of Toulouse. Simon, however, roundly beat the two of them at the battle of Muret in 1213, Peter losing his life in an ignominious rout. King John, threatened with an invasion of England, had been unable to bring support to the count of Toulouse. In 1214, however, he may have taken homage from Raymond, and his campaigns in Aquitaine served to strengthen Raymond's cause.

Philip Augustus forbade Prince Louis to join the crusade, and when the prince did eventually arrive for a brief stay in the Languedoc in 1215 it was to find Simon in a position of great strength. The Fourth Lateran Council of the same year declared that Raymond VI had forfeited his lands and that these should go to Simon de Montfort: Simon rapidly went north to do homage to Philip Augustus for Toulouse. Meanwhile Raymond VI and his son were building up support to mount a counter-offensive, which Simon's death in 1218 was greatly to assist.

Pope Honorius III and Aimery, Simon's son, next attempted to involve the French king again. Philip Augustus remained unenthusiastic until the papal legate offered the leadership of the expedition to Theobald IV of Champagne, also heir to the kingdom of Navarre and a young and ambitious man. To counterbalance Theobald's power and ambitions, the French king now put Prince Louis in his place, in 1218 extracting twentieths to finance the crusade in the Languedoc. Louis's campaign in 1219 was however brief and achieved little. It was also very violent: following a siege, the fortified town of Marmande saw all its inhabitants

put to the sword by rampaging troops and was burnt to the ground. After Louis's departure, Raymond VI (who died in 1222) and his son Raymond VII continued to gain ground. In 1221 Pope Honorius again appealed to Philip Augustus, offering him a large tax on ecclesiastical wealth and a full plenary indulgence as well as the lands remaining to Aimery de Montfort if he would invade the Languedoc and annex it to the royal lands. Philip again refused, and by 1224 Raymond VII was in almost full possession of the county of Toulouse: the papacy seemed utterly stymied.

Having succeeded his father in 1223 Louis VIII was, however, receptive towards crusading ideals and the gains that he stood to make in the Languedoc and was ready to throw substantial resources into it. In 1224 he offered to lead a crusade in person, but his price, which included enormous financial support from the church, was too high. The pope, to his surprise and anger, turned his proposals down. A year later Honorius III changed his mind and agreed to terms equally favourable to the French king. At the ecclesiastical council of Bourges in 1225 Raymond VII was declared excommunicate and his lands forfeit. Aimery de Montfort was recognised as the legal count, and in 1226 he ceded his rights of overlordship to the king. This gave the king the princely as well as the royal authority in the region. Louis now raised another tithe, gathered a vast army and marched south. Raymond VII aligned himself with the young Henry III of England, who had recently lost Poitou and La Rochelle to Louis, but the French royal army proved irresistible. Once the resistance of Avignon had been overcome, the southern nobility was anxious to submit.

The death of Louis VIII in 1226, however, slowed up the seemingly inexorable progress of the royal forces. In 1229 Raymond VII was to acquire far more favourable terms from Louis IX and his mother Blanche of Castile than he would have done from Louis VIII. The crown took the Trencavel lands around Carcasonne and Albi and the eastern provinces of the county of Toulouse; the remainder was to be retained by Raymond during his lifetime but was then to pass to his daughter Joan and her husband-to-be, Alfonso, Louis IX's brother (pp. 333–335).

Through these conquests the French monarchy gained a substantial and powerful foothold in the lands of the south. But Philip Augustus and Louis VIII were both entirely realistic in not wanting to move into the area until their position vis-à-vis the Plantagenets was relatively secure. Nor were they prepared to fight the counts of Toulouse directly – with the risk of driving them into alliance with the English kings – until the position of the latter had been greatly weakened.

Philip had intervened in the Languedoc in 1219 only to curb the expansionist ambitions of another great principality, Champagne. The capture of Poitou and La Rochelle, the most populous and the wealthiest area held by Henry III, in 1224, greatly strengthened Louis VIII's hand; furthermore, the willingness of the pope, after some prevarication, to allow him full financial support but the freedom to dispose of his own gains now made the invasion of the Languedoc a worthwhile proposition. But before this Philip, despite the conquests of 1204–5, and the great victory of 1214, had still potentially been in a vulnerable position.

And in 1226, despite the great gains made by the crown, which brought it to a dominant position in France, it had still to secure its position. This Blanche of Castile and Louis IX were to achieve.

The kings and the church

Louis VI, Louis VII and the church

Louis VI's energies were not always directed into channels regarded as worthwhile by the church. When his third son Henry was five he was already abbot of Saint-Mellon at Pontoise and Notre-Dame at Poissy, and to these Henry was to add four other abbacies and the dignity of treasurer of Saint-Martin's abbey at Tours. Yet Louis maintained generally amicable terms with the papacy. In 1107 Pope Paschal II arrived in France to seek support against the Emperor Henry V, and obligingly annulled Louis's marriage with Lucienne of Rochefort.

The papal legate Conan visited the royal lands in 1114–15 and hurled anathemas against the troublesome castellans of the region. In 1120 Pope Calixtus II held a general synod of the church at Reims, where reforming measures were promulgated and where Henry V of Germany was again excommunicated. Louis VI spoke out against Henry I of England – but the pope was less hostile to the English king and brokered a rather unfavourable peace for the French king with England shortly afterwards. He nevertheless allowed the young Simon of Vermandois, a relative of the king, to be elected to the bishopric of Tournai, eliciting opposition from the archbishop of Reims over this.

In 1122 the pope and the emperor sealed the concordat of Worms and Paschal and his successor Honorius II could now afford to be more critical of the Capetian king's infringements of ecclesiastical privileges. But in 1130 a papal schism divided the western church. Pope Anacletus II was elected by the Pierleoni family, and Innocent II by the Frangipani. Louis seemed at first to be moving towards the support of Anacletus, but Innocent II, exiled from Italy, gained the powerful backing of Bernard of Clairvaux and the Cistercians. An ecclesiastical council for France met at Étampes and found for him in the king's presence. When Philip, Louis's eldest son died, Innocent crowned the future Louis VII as the next heir. In 1132–3 this pope, with the support of the Emperor Lothar III and Henry I of England as well as Louis VI, returned to Rome in triumph.

From 1133, Innocent II's relations with the French king became cooler. The pope blamed the archbishops of Sens and Reims as well as Louis himself for not avenging the murder of the prior of Saint-Victor and the subdean of Orléans. When in 1135 the pope called a council at Pisa the king was unwilling to let the French bishops attend, and this caused Bernard of Clairvaux to rain abuse and threats on him. But relations warmed up a little at the end of Louis's reign.

Within France, Louis VI, anxious to preserve his regalian rights, was drawn into a number of disputes over elections and investitures. He did not sell bishoprics or abbacies, but he supervised elections and insisted on his consent to the successful

candidate being obtained, thus maintaining his regalian rights where he could. The incoming bishops and abbots, whilst not invested by the king, were expected to pay him homage for their lands. Such royal controls did not meet with much opposition; indeed in 1119 William of Champeaux, bishop-elect of Châlons, held Louis VI up as an example to emperor Henry V, declaring that he owed him aid, military service and counsel.

Within his kingdom, Louis fell out with the church over some elections to bishoprics.[182] Before he became king he supported his father against admitting Ivo of Chartres to the see of Beauvais, and in 1106 he quarrelled with Pope Paschal II over the archbishopric of Reims, in dispute between Gervais of Rethel and Ralph *le Vert*, provost of Reims, the candidate of the reformers. In 1108 both cases were resolved, the king accepting the candidates of the reformers but extracting oaths of homage and obedience. He continued to stand up for royal rights in elections later in the reign. In 1112, according to Guibert of Nogent, following the murder of Waldric, bishop of Laon, he nominated his successor, Hugh, dean of Sainte-Croix at Orléans. And when in 1122 the monks of Saint-Denis informed him of Suger's election to Saint-Denis he is said to have imprisoned some of them in a tower for failing to ask his permission; and this despite the favourable outcome for himself.

In 1128 Stephen of Senlis, bishop of Paris, attempted to introduce Victorine canons into the cathedral chapter with the support of Bernard of Clairvaux. Although the king was founder and patron of the order he refused to allow this, because his own powers over the see would have been reduced, and he drove Stephen out of Paris. Bernard of Clairvaux on this occasion described the king as a new Herod, the destroyer of his own kingdom and an enemy of his crown. Such breaches were not long-lasting, but they show that even whilst supporting disciplinary reforms of the church, the new orders and the new learning Louis always sought above all to maintain his own position.

This king has often been portrayed as a protector of defenceless clerics against the ravages of lay lords. There is an element of truth in this view, for the king responded to a number of appeals from ecclesiastics such as the bishop of Clermont, thereby also building up influence in areas outside the royal principality. But he was also firm with bishops or abbots who had taken rights from laymen and ignored the law. In 1113 he instructed Arnaud, abbot of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif at Sens, to give back to a royal vassal the lands he had usurped from him. When in 1110 Waldric, bishop of Laon, was an accomplice in the murder of Gerard of Quierzy he was tried before the king and exiled from his lands. Some ecclesiastical cases were heard first in the church courts and then came before the king, a pattern widely accepted by the French clergy, which was to prove of considerable benefit to the king.

Louis VI was far more open-handed to the monastic orders than his father had been. He favoured established Benedictine houses, foremost of which was Saint-Denis, to which the king gave the profits of the fair of Lendit in 1124. This was an acknowledgement of the special place of its patron saint as defender of the realm (pp. 91–92). In about 1133 the king, with Queen Adela, founded a Benedictine nunnery at Montmartre that was given substantial estates, made an abbey in 1134

and put directly under papal jurisdiction. When in 1136 a major consecration of the church took place Pope Eugenius III, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux and Abbot Peter the Venerable of Cluny were all there, a measure of the importance of the event. Adela, the joint founder, was buried here after her death in 1154.

Generous to new orders, the king was also responsible for another important monastic foundation in Paris, the abbey of Saint-Victor, on the Mont-Sainte-Geneviève. This was founded for canons regular in about 1113 and dedicated in 1114 by Pope Paschal II. It became the centre of a congregation of Augustinian houses and may have acted as a royal chancery under Louis VII; and the Victorine canons became celebrated for their learning. William of Champeaux, the celebrated theologian, is, indeed, supposed to have given the king the idea of founding the house.

Louis also, despite his disagreements with Saint Bernard, gave the Cistercian order important privileges, and in 1136 he refounded a Benedictine priory, Châalis, as a Cistercian abbey, in memory of Charles the Good, count of Flanders. Other orders he endowed were the Premonstratensian canons, the mixed order of Fontevraud, and small hospitals; and he created perpetual chapels in the royal palaces at Paris and Senlis to intercede for his soul. These institutions were to be very popular with his successors, for as well as providing the king with the service of prayer they provided livings for clerks from the royal household.

Louis VII had a well-deserved reputation for piety, and for being a protector and defender of the church, which enhanced his standing. He gained considerable moral and political capital from his help to Thomas Becket, and after Becket's death became a strong adherent of the archbishop's cult, even crossing the channel to visit his shrine at Canterbury during the last few months of his life. He supported the canonisation of Peter of Tarentaise in 1175 – although not that of Bernard of Clairvaux.

Whilst far less ready than his father to act violently in matters ecclesiastical, in the first part of his reign he was just as determined as Louis VI to maintain his rights and powers over the French church, and he soon found himself embroiled in wrangles with the pope as a result.[183] On the death of Archbishop Renaud of Reims the king took over the estates of the see, as was customary, and granted a commune to the townspeople, which was not. In 1138 he then refused the canons of Reims a licence to elect their archbishop. The pope's insistence that the commune be disbanded and that Louis should take his advice on the election infuriated the king. But in the end the unruly behaviour of the citizens caused the king himself to disband the commune in 1141, having already backed down on the election. This, however, produced an acceptable candidate.

The most dramatic dispute came about in 1141 over the election to the archbishopric of Bourges. Louis VII wanted this glittering prize for his royal chancellor Cadurc and forbade the canons to choose the papal candidate Peter of La Châtre – but they ignored his instructions and elected Peter. Louis refused to confirm him in office. The pope fulminated against the king and Louis vowed that Peter would never hold the office. The conflict was widened to include the marital problems

of Ralph of Vermandois and Petronilla of Aquitaine and the war in Champagne. Following the burning of the church at Vitry by the king, a papal excommunication and interdict, and the intervention of Suger and Bernard of Clairvaux, a now-contrite Louis was however persuaded to come to terms with Pope Celestine II in 1144 and to back down.

For the rest of his reign Louis did not relax his control over royal churches but was far more conciliatory towards the papacy and less ready for disputes over episcopal elections. The Cistercian pope Eugenius III was anxious to gain his alliance. For a short while in 1147 Eugenius took refuge in France from problems in Rome and launched the Second Crusade at Saint-Denis. Louis VII's assumption of the leadership of the crusade greatly increased his prestige and standing with the church, despite the failure of the expedition.

The two successors of Eugenius, Anastasius IV and Adrian IV, were more closely aligned with the emperor than with Louis VII, but in 1159 there was another disputed papal election. Frederick I supported Victor IV, while Henry II of England and Louis VII came out for Alexander III. Louis tried to negotiate with Frederick, but this was a failure, and in 1162 he became the firm supporter and protector of Alexander III. After Alexander's return to Rome in 1165, the pope remained on good terms with Louis, advising him in 1172 to have his son Philip crowned, and seeking to mediate in the struggle of the Capetian king against the Plantagenets.

Outside his domain, Louis extended royal influence into the sees of Autun, Mâcon and Mende, and supported the abbey of Vézelay against the count of Nevers, ecclesisastics in the Auvergne against the count, and churches in the Mâconnais against local lords, spreading royal influence. He helped to reform some religious communities, including Sainte-Geneviève in Paris and Saint-Corneille at Compiègne; in the latter case a certain amount of force was needed to replace secular canons with Benedictine monks. The abbeys of Manglieu, Saint-Gilles and Cusset, and the important Cluniac priory of La Charité-sur-Loire he brought under royal control.

Early in his reign he was an important patron of the Cistercian order. His donations included a grant of £30 a year to Clairvaux and he founded and generously endowed the major Cistercian abbey of Barbeaux in 1146–7. The king and queen were to be buried here in what was, according to Rigord, the most magnificent tomb conceived since the days of Solomon. It is probable that the king was so munificent that the Cistercians modified in his favour their statutes forbidding lay people to be interred in their churches; and in 1183 they allowed a special anniversary mass to be said for him, another relaxation of the normal rule that patrons were to be remembered only on four set occasions during the year. Overall, however, particularly in the period after the crusade, Louis VII did not give away nearly as much land to the church as had his father, favouring, rather, the increasingly popular smaller monastic institutions such as hospitals.

In such ways Louis VII gained and retained the support and alliance of the church in northern France, which was to serve his successors in good stead. Electors to royal bishoprics often chose incumbents from the royal entourage or from families

who supported the king. Manasses, bishop of Orléans from 1146 to 1185, was a Garlande; Hugh of Champfleury, the royal chancellor, became bishop of Soissons. The Châtillon-sur-Marne and Noyers family provided an archbishop of Sens, Guy; they were allied to the Capetians since Robert of Dreux's daughter had married the lord of Châtillon. In 1183 Hugh of Châtillon became bishop of Auxerre.

The king's own family, and the relations of his third wife, Adela of Champagne, provided him with several bishops; his brother Henry became archbishop of Reims in 1162; his brother-in-law, William aux Blanches-Mains, held the same see from 1176. There were some exceptions; the perfect regularity of John of Salisbury's election to the bishopric of Chartres in 1176 astonished the abbot of Reims, and many elections served to promote archdeacons and other officials already serving in the diocese, or regular clergy.[184] But by keeping a watchful eye on the selection of bishops the king further extended royal influence and gained an episcopate that supported royal policy. His was a piety with valuable and significant political consequences.

Philip Augustus, Louis VIII and the church

Philip Augustus, said Joinville, declared on his deathbed that he would rather forfeit royal rights than quarrel with God's priests. William the Breton describes the king as an admirer and a defender of the clergy. His actions suggest that he was rather less accommodating than these eulogies imply, however, and when he did allow the church to enjoy rights and privileges there were very often good political reasons, as in Normandy.

Philip Augustus went on the Third Crusade, a highly significant manifestation of royal piety and Christian leadership. Yet he left the siege of Acre in 1191 to return to France in order to settle his claims in Artois and Vermandois, as well as to undermine fellow crusader Richard I's position in his French lands. And he does not seem to have matched the exceptional levels of personal piety shown by his father in the second part of his reign; indeed, the close links that Louis VII had built up with the papacy came under some strain. But the French church generally tended to support the king against the pope, particularly against the dynamic, centralising and authoritarian Innocent III.

Philip's first quarrel with the papacy came about in 1196 when he repudiated Ingeborg of Denmark and was married to Agnes of Méran with the backing of several French bishops. Pope Celestine III responded to an appeal from Ingeborg's brother, Cnut VI of Denmark, and sent papal bulls and papal legates to France, declaring that the divorce of Philip and Ingeborg was invalid. This had little effect, but Innocent III, who took office in 1198, was of sterner stuff. Threatening king and kingdom with excommunication, he instructed his legates to order Philip and Agnes to separate and to put on trial those bishops who had supported the king. Yet when the interdict was pronounced by Peter of Capua in 1198 many French bishops refused to observe it. These included the archbishop of Reims and the bishops of Chartres, Orléans and Beauvais. The bishops of Senlis and Paris obeyed the pope, and Philip ravaged their lands. In 1200 Philip agreed in principle to a

reconciliation with Ingeborg and to submit the case to be heard by an ecclesiastical assembly. This took place at Soissons in 1201, but nothing concrete emerged and the marital deadlock persisted.

In the same year, however, Agnes died, and her children by Philip were legitimised by the pope. Still, Ingeborg was kept imprisoned by Philip until 1213, during which period negotiations between the king and the pope continued. In this year he reinstated her, perhaps to gain the alliance and support of both Denmark and the papacy, and she remained the recognised queen of France until her death in 1223. The disputed imperial throne was a further cause of friction between the king and the pope, but from 1210 Philip and Innocent both backed Frederick II. For a while Philip also supported Innocent III against John of England.

Innocent played a significant if somewhat controversial role in the wars of the early thirteenth century, and in examining his achievements it is easy to overlook his important reforming activities, which culminated in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. Another notable achievement was his encouragement of Francis of Assisi (p. 288), bringing him and his order under the protection of the Roman see. But it was the temporal, political side of his activities that concerned the sovereigns of western Europe most closely, and here his aims and intentions have proved controversial. Was he a forerunner of popes later in the thirteenth century who claimed temporal power, or did he intervene only in a spiritual capacity?

In his glorification of the papal office Innocent extended to some degree the claims of his predecessors to intervene in secular affairs, suggesting that since spiritual power was superior to temporal power, in some instances the pope might need to intervene in secular matters.[185] In doing so, he made some new claims over the sovereigns of western Europe; and these were in practice effective at times, particularly in the case of England, a reflection of his pragmatic realism. They would also provide a precedent for the more sweeping political interventions of his successors.

Philip Augustus was not prepared to allow any extension of papal pretensions in France. In 1203 Innocent ordered him to make peace with John but Philip, with the backing of his council, declared that the matter was a feudal one and not the concern of the pope; nor did the pope have a say in disputes between kings. In 1204 Innocent responded, disclaiming all interest in matters feudal, but this, he said, was a matter of sin: John had complained that Philip had acted wrongfully against him, and so he was bound to intervene.[186] This approach to the French king and his bishops was well chosen. A further instance of realism on the part of Innocent was his reply to the Norman clergy when they asked him whether they should follow John or Philip, and he instructed them to make their own decision.

The pope was far more closely involved in the early stages of the crusade against the Albigensians than was the French king. Prince Louis was permitted to go south by his father in 1215 when the position of the count of Toulouse, against whom the crusade was largely directed, was weak. But Raymond VI and Raymond VII subsequently recovered their position against the crusaders, and Pope Honorius III had to give Louis VIII very generous terms in 1225 to persuade him to join the armies of the pope. It was the French crown that ultimately benefited the most.

Philip Augustus generally allowed free elections to take place in bishoprics, particularly in conquered lands, although his consent was required before the victorious candidate could be installed. In long-standing royal bishoprics, the king's men were often elected, as with Warin, the king's principal adviser, made bishop of Senlis in 1213. The king also upheld his regalian rights and was ready to compel loyalty from the episcopate if necessary. In 1201, according to William the Breton, the clergy of Reims refused to give him aid in the war against John, and the king in his turn delayed taking action against the count of Rethel and Roger of Rozoy, who were oppressing the church's lands, until they had changed their minds. In 1200 he confiscated the estates of the bishops of Orléans and Auxerre when they refused him military service. Philip, then, remained a firm master of the French episcopate.

He also maintained strong control over the abbeys in his lands. Whilst permitting 'free elections' he frequently expected his own candidates to be chosen, and in the 1190s he mulcted religious houses to pay for his wars against Richard I. To Saint-Denis – which William the Breton emphasised as being the most prestigious royal monastery – he gave important relics from Constantinople in 1205, but little else, and to other monastic establishments he generally issued only standard confirmation charters. In general he seems to have kept any charitable instincts firmly subordinated to political reality, making only a few grants, sufficient to secure the well-being of his soul. Rigord says that in the 1190s Philip gave money to feed the poor at a time of famine and instructed his bishops and abbots to do the same. He gave modest grants to a number of small hospitals that would have been of considerable importance to them, as when the leper hospital at Chartres was allowed the profits of an annual fair in 1186; and like his predecessors he also endowed a number of perpetual chapels, to intercede for his soul.

These were broadly the same kind of grants made by King John in England and reflect a general shift of interest towards small monasteries and hospitals. But even here Philip was not generous, and his 'foundations' of larger abbeys suggest that in this area of patronage at least, he was getting intercession on the cheap. In 1201 he refounded the existing and well-endowed priory of Saint-Corentin at Mantes as an abbey, and Agnes of Méran was buried here. After the battle of Bouvines the king founded a house for Victorine canons at La Victoire to commemorate his great victory, but the archives of this establishment suggest that in fact Philip gave it almost nothing. The site came from Warin of Senlis, and it was Louis VIII who was to endow the establishment and give it a confirmation charter on its consecration in 1225.

Philip was more generous to the church posthumously. In his first will, drawn up in 1190 before he went on crusade, he left half his treasure to the poor and to churches in reparation for the damage done by war and the burden of his taxation. In a later testament drawn up in 1222 he left La Victoire an annual pension of £240 *parisis*, plus an immediate downpayment of £2,000 *parisis* to construct the church and monastery. He also laid down that the Templars and Hospitallers should have substantial sums, 3,000 and 2,000 silver marks respectively, and a further £21,000 was set aside for the poor and sick. To Saint-Denis, where he

chose to be buried, he presented his gold and jewels to endow a perpetual service of prayer for him. The king was, therefore, far more generous to the church after his death than during his life.

During his short reign Louis VIII, widely respected for his piety, was rather more open-handed to the church than was his father. About a quarter of his total surviving charters went to monasteries, although clearly the proportion is an inflated one, since most of the standard confirmation charters were issued at the beginning of any reign, and later would have dropped in frequency. He also issued his officials with instructions not to interpret too strictly the rights of the crown against certain religious houses: in 1225 he even put Saint-Mesmin at Orléans under his protection against the inroads of his own *baillis* and *prévôts*. And Louis, probably through the influence of his wife Blanche of Castile, was generous to the Cistercians, for example giving Cîteaux a £200 rent each year from Béziers and Carcassonne. As with his father there was also a political element in his monastic patronage, for he was careful to give confirmations and to make some grants to important ecclesiastical establishments in the Languedoc. In the south of France the clergy played a very important role in securing the king's position.

In northern France Louis VIII maintained his rights over the clergy, as his father had done. The only strong opposition he encountered from the episcopate came in Normandy. When the king invaded Poitou, three Norman bishops left the royal army between Tours and Poitiers, refusing the king service outside the duchy, and Louis, after taking counsel, had an enquiry made into their customary obligations. They were found to owe him service and had to pay a fine. Otherwise, however, the king received close co-operation from the bishops, many of whom attended royal councils and advised him.

On Louis VIII's death much of the French church was closely controlled by the king, and a number of important patterns of co-operation had been established. The king was prepared to allow canonical elections and for customary rights to be observed, but he expected royal servants to be provided with important benefices. Military service from the major ecclesiastical establishments was regarded as mandatory, as was the king's right to administer the lands of royal churches in vacancies. Full political obedience was expected, and tithes and other taxes could be, and were, levied to finance royal crusades with the agreement of the papacy. But already the loyalty of the French church was given to the king above the pope, and this bond was to be of momentous consequence in the later Capetian period.

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5

LOUIS IX

The consolidation of royal power, 1226–70

Introduction

Louis IX: holy kingship and political power

Writing from Carthage to the French church and people in September 1270, the new king of France, Philip III, announced the holy death of his father Louis IX as an inestimable loss to Christendom.

> Everyone grieves equally for the pious king, the peaceful king, the father of the poor, the refuge of the miserable, the consolation of the oppressed, the particular champion of all religion and innocence, the zealous supporter of justice, the defender of the faith and the church.[1]

This view of Louis IX, presaging his canonisation in 1297 as Saint Louis, has proved highly compelling. His immediate successors, the late Capetian and early Valois kings, glorified his piety, crusades and Christian kingship, portraying him as saint-king, a model for their sacral powers.[2] To many of their subjects, struggling against encroaching royal authority, the impact of war and unstable economic times, his reign was seen as a lost golden age.

After a period of eclipse, the *ancien régime* celebrated him as a national and political saint, emblematic of absolute monarchy: the name of Louis was given to their heirs by all the Bourbon kings. His images and iconography were therefore reviled and in many cases destroyed during the revolutionary period. But then, in the early nineteenth century, he was rehabilitated as the father of the French people, and today retains a pivotal role in France's national legend.[3] There has consequently been a tendency to portray him with great reverence, as a saint in a stained-glass

window; but historians, particularly since the middle of the twentieth century, have assessed Louis and his reign in a far more complex and many-faceted way.[4] Yet while his achievements as a ruler are now increasingly well-understood, as a man Louis IX presents posterity with many contradictions.[5]

What are the principal sources for the king and his reign? The most celebrated narrative today is the gossipy and readable yet complex and layered *Life of Saint Louis* by John, lord of Joinville, the king's servant, counsellor and friend. Completed in the early fourteenth century, but based in part on much earlier material, this brings the king to life as a chivalric knight and crusader, a just ruler and a man of deep personal piety, at once fallible and holy.[6]

The opening and closing sections of Joinville's account were clearly written long after Louis IX's death, in the roseate glow of his canonisation. Dwelling in great detail on the king's piety and good works, they draw heavily on and have much in common with the roughly contemporary accounts of Geoffrey of Beaulieu, William of Saint-Pathus and other hagiographers. In his core narrative, however, Joinville gives a long and lively description of Louis's first crusade, based on his own recollection of events. This presents the king in a favourable light, but makes no attempt to conceal his reliance on the counsels of his brother, Robert of Artois, and the foolish and dangerous mistakes made by the French as a result. Probably drawing heavily on material compiled soon after his return from the East,[7] this central part of Joinville's *Life of Saint Louis* is the most immediate portrait of the king that we have, imbued with secular, chivalric and aristocratic values.[8] (Source 5.1).

SOURCE 5.1 JOINVILLE, *LIFE OF SAINT LOUIS*

John, lord of Joinville, came from a cadet family of the counts of Joigny, which possessed considerable estates and the hereditary title of seneschals of Champagne. Born in about 1222, after a period of service with the count of Champagne he went on crusade with the king in 1248. With him travelled a troupe of nine knights and 700 men, but to finance them he had to mortgage a large part of his lands. He became a close companion to the king, who rescued him from his financial problems by taking him into his own service. After his return to France he was regularly at court and remained a royal counsellor.

He did not go to Tunis with the king in 1270, but he continued as a trusted servant of Louis's successors. An Italian attorney, Frances Barberino, who met Joinville in his old age described him as a respected, courtly and very wise figure. Philip III put him in charge of the administration of the county of Champagne during the minority of Joan, later wife of Philip IV; and it was this queen who in 1305 asked the aged seneschal to write his *Life of Saint Louis*.

His text was completed in 1309 and dedicated to Prince Louis (X), but Joinville lived on until about 1317.[9]

Views of Louis in the later middle ages were shaped by hagiographical accounts, endowing him with the saintly virtues of piety, charity, humility and devotion rather than the values of rulership.[10] Best known are the accounts of Louis's confessor Geoffrey of Beaulieu and his fellow Dominican William of Chartres, who accompanied the king on both his crusades, were with him when he died and soon began collecting evidence of miraculous cures at the king's tomb in Saint-Denis. Writing between 1272 and about 1275 to promote his canonisation, they projected onto Louis the mendicant ideals of piety, humility and caring for the poor, while providing also many valuable vignettes which reveal his human side – and even acknowledge criticisms of the king.[11]

Amongst a mass of other further later testimonies, a third significant hagiographical account of the king stands out. Compiled by William of Saint-Pathus, the Franciscan former confessor to Queen Margaret, in 1302–3, it was based on the rich evidence put forward in support of Louis's canonisation in 1282–3. Again, structured around conventional saintly virtues, it contains important material about the king's administration and makes much also of his secular attributes of loyalty, courtliness, honour, integrity and concern for his troops.[12]

These narrative sources are coloured by the hindsight of Louis's canonisation and by the very different political climate of his successors' reigns during which they were produced. But there are many other sources which cast light on the king and his reign. Louis appears also in other more contemporary narratives such as the historical compilations produced by the monks of Saint-Denis and by other chroniclers such as Vincent of Beauvais and Peter Coral; and as the leading political figure in western Europe his deeds are recorded in external sources such as the writings of Matthew Paris, an English Benedictine monk, and the memoirs of the Italian friar Salimbene of Parma.

The king emerges too from a wealth of other written material: literary sources, poetry and sermons, along with legal proceedings and collections of customs, royal acts, ordinances and testimonies, administrative records and financial accounts. Unlike his predecessors, some of his own words have come down to us, promulgated in his ordinances and reported in the narrative sources.[13] Moreover, a great deal of material culture survives from his reign, much of it associated with the king: great buildings such as the Sainte-Chapelle and Saint-Denis, fortifications such as Angers and Aigues-Mortes, superbly illuminated bibles and service books, sumptuous jewels and reliquaries.

Yet this wealth of material poses many challenges: Louis seems often tantalizingly contradictory and just out of reach. In his magisterial study of the king and his reign, Le Goff famously questions if Louis can ever be understood as an individual person, or perceived only as a construct, a model of a king, an ideal type of saint. 'Did Saint Louis exist at all if the Saint Louis of the records is the only one we have?' he asks. Ultimately however Le Goff does make an assessment of Louis, acknowledging what today we would see as his flaws, but overall finding him a charming, beguiling and impressive historical figure.[14] William Chester Jordan by contrast, in various important studies of the king and his reign, is equally sure of the extent of his achievements but sees him as disturbed, cruel and oppressive.[15]

These different interpretations stem from the many contradictions displayed by Louis himself. Joinville shows that while Louis sought to be moderate and controlled, he could at times be impulsive, stubborn, tactless and impatient, startlingly willful and impetuous, quickly roused to anger, unwilling to take advice from his counsellors. This behaviour could have tragic consequences, as demonstrated by his abortive crusading campaign in Egypt (pp. 269–271).[16] In addition, his was a very long reign. The king developed a new outlook in the lead-up to his crusade; his experiences in Outremer had a further profound impact on him and shaped the later part of his reign. Louis as a knightly young man in the 1230s and early 1240s thus seems to have been markedly different in his outlook and behaviour from the obsessively pious and ascetic king of the 1260s.

Born in 1214 and heir to the Capetian throne from 1219 after the death of his elder brother Philip, Louis was brought up in the cultured and sophisticated court of Louis VIII and Blanche of Castile. Their children were all highly educated – Louis reputedly learning to read using an illuminated psalter belonging to his mother – and were in adulthood well able to correct any defective Latin produced by their clerks.[17] The king was fond of all his siblings, valuing both his sister Isabella whose pious activities earned her a reputation in court circles as a saint in waiting,[18] and his brothers Robert of Artois, Alfonso of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou, who much preferred knightly and courtly pursuits and gambling.[19]

For almost two decades Blanche of Castile, first as guardian of the kingdom then as queen mother, exercised a profound influence over Louis IX; this began to weaken only after he took his crusading vow in 1244. His views on sacral kingship and moral conduct and his very strong personal piety all clearly owed a great deal to his mother's teachings, and in running his kingdom he relied very greatly on her abilities and influence right up to her death in 1252.

Following their wedding in 1234, his queen, Margaret of Provence, struggled to assert herself within the household and kingdom, and while their marriage was tender at first, the two became more distant by the mid-1240s, Louis's view of her seemingly being coloured by her unsuccessful struggles against Blanche (pp. 259–260). Louis carefully chose his counsellors and administrators to further his transformational political and moral agenda, and laid great trust in them.[20] But reflecting the lead of the king himself, his court was at times the centre of joyous and lavish celebrations, at others unforgiving, austere and faction-ridden.

In appearance and physique, the king seems to have inherited the good looks of his father Louis VIII. Salimbene describes him as 'thin, slender, lean and tall; he had an angelic countenance and a gracious person'.[21] Yet even when young his health was often poor. In 1244 he came close to death, the result perhaps of a malarial infection or perhaps of dysentery, and after the further rigours of his captivity and illness in the East, he returned from crusade in 1254 physically diminished, bald and stooped. His ascetic lifestyle and self-mortification weakened him yet further and in his last years he became a shadow of his earlier self.

Louis exemplified all the contemporary strengths and values of the warrior king when in 1242, aged 28, he led his great French host out and defeated Henry III of

England at Taillebourg in pitched battle (p. 263). Well-trained in the arts of war, and imbued with the ethos of chivalry, he enjoyed the life of battlefield, although like many clerics of the day he seems to have regarded hunting as ritualized violence and would not indulge in it.[22] He adhered to the code of the *prud'homme*, a man of probity: honour, loyalty, justice, courtesy and moderation (p. 321). Joinville describes his attempts to control himself, showing temperate appetite and moderation in his speech, and recounts that he never heard him speak evil of anyone. The king had a sense of the absurd and enjoyed laughter and conversation, although he could also at times behave in a withdrawn and reticent manner. Yet, instilled with high moral principles and an exalted sense of his royal authority, he could clearly exercise a strong personal charisma.[23]

Another defining image of the king, this time as a lawgiver, comes to us also through the testimony of Joinville. He describes the king sitting under a tree in the woods at Vincennes after Mass, surrounded by his entourage. He would himself summon anyone seeking a legal resolution: 'all those who had matters to be dealt with came and talked to him, without the interference of the ushers'. On other occasions he would dispense justice to the people in his gardens in Paris, simply dressed and wearing a hat decorated with a white peacock feather.[24] Although considered by some historians to have been confected, these scenes reflect what we know of the king's concern for the rights of all his people, no matter how humble, and his informal style of governance. They have also been highly influential in shaping Louis's place in the national memory of France.

Louis's commitment to just rulership is made clear in the administrative records of the reign, as well as in the narrative sources of his reign. Fulfilling the sacred trust laid upon him by his coronation oath, both in the lead-up to his crusade and afterwards, he dispatched his *enquêteurs* around his lands to root out corruption and remedy ills. His celebrated reforming ordinance of 1254 laid out a code of conduct for local government officials. Moreover, his moral authority as the fount of justice and wisdom was expressed on a wider canvas through his role as a mediator. Such was his reputation that not only did he arbitrate as suzerain on major disputes about lands and rights within France, most notably in the cases of Hainault, Gascony and the Languedoc, but he was invited also to determine cases outside the realm. During his lifetime, the English chronicler Matthew Paris, no admirer of contemporary monarchs, portrayed Louis as just and pious, the pinnacle of kings.

Louis was, too, every inch the sacral Capetian king. In his public piety, his style of kingship and his attitude towards the church he restated and redefined the image and symbolism of monarchy. He saw himself as a holy king in his own right, divinely ordained and not deriving his power from the church, which he treated justly but firmly, putting royal interests first. He presided over the creation of the great pantheon for his royal predecessors – Merovingian, Carolingian and Capetian – at Saint-Denis, and he organised and attended lavish royal ceremonials and feasts.[25] His ecclesiastical buildings such as the magnificent Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, created to house the highly prestigious relics of the passion, glorified kingship as well as God, as did the highly staged ceremonies that went with them.[26]

In taking the cross in 1244 Louis was once again manifesting the crusading leadership role of the Capetian dynasty, as his predecessors had done: Louis VII and Philip Augustus in the Latin crusader states and Louis VIII in the Languedoc (pp. 171, 229–232). Despite his military failures and his vast and ultimately fruitless outlay of French funding in fortifying the great citadels of Outremer, and despite the apocalyptic fears and political chaos which his absence created in France, on his return the king gained huge moral credit and authority for his crusade of 1248–54. His experiences had a profound impact on him, deepening his piety, creating an excoriating sense of personal guilt and strengthening his determination to rule his people justly and wisely in atonement for his sins.

In making a case for his canonisation, Louis's hagiographers emphasise his personal piety, so strong that it put many a monk to shame, and at times at odds with his royal persona and role. His particular concern for marginalised people, the poor, sick and dispossessed, the blind, lepers and victims of crime, was not just a construct made for his cult. It was manifested in the records, which demonstrate his markedly generous spending on charitable giving and hospitals, especially in the later years of his reign. Many of his entourage thought this excessive and the recipients as unworthy. Yet the king was unmoved by such criticisms.

Louis was equally unswerving in his ascetic mortifications. Determined to atone for the failure of his crusade in person, in his later years he carried his personal devotions well beyond what most contemporaries saw as reasonable, to ostentatious extremes: an exceedingly plain diet and self-immolation by wearing a hair shirt and being whipped by his confessors (Source 5.2). Obsessed with saints and relics, and perpetually surrounded by priests and religious men, he was mocked and derided by some contemporaries as more friar than king. Reports of his death in Tunis, wearing a hair shirt and lying on a bed of ashes, evoked a tradition of saints and martyrs stretching right back to Saint Martin in the fifth century.[27]

SOURCE 5.2 LOUIS IX'S HAIR SHIRT, TUNIC AND SCOURGE

Deeply imbued with a sense of sin, in his later years Louis IX adopted an extremely penitential lifestyle. Geoffrey of Beaulieu writes with admiration of his plain dress and his ascetic fasting, adding however that this became so extreme that his confessors urged him to modify his rigours for the sake of his health. Of equal concern to them was his wearing of a hair shirt next to his skin on Fridays during Advent and Lent and on other fast days, which they thought was too painful and diminished his royal status. Moreover, after each confession he insisted that his confessor should beat him with scourge comprising five metal chains; this he carried with him on his belt in an ivory box. If his confessor was too lenient the king would urge him to strike harder, and the king would suffer over-zealous discipline with joy.

A linen shirt and a penitential scourge dating from the mid-thirteenth century are today to be found in the treasury of Notre-Dame-de-Paris. Listed in 1418 amongst the treasures of the Sainte-Chapelle, they have long been revered as Louis's own, and are similar to those depicted in a near-contemporary image of the king being chastised by his confessor. The scourge consists of an ivory box with metal chains attached, and corresponds closely with Geoffrey of Beaulieu's description of Louis's own whip (although it has fewer chains; its label is not contemporary). From a forensic examination in the 1970s, the linen tunic was found to have slight traces of ancient blood on it, which could perhaps have been that of the king himself. A hair shirt from about the same date was preserved amongst the relics of Saint Louis at the abbey of Le Lys and might similarly have been one used by the king.[28]

(continued)

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IMAGES 5.1 AND 5.2 Linen shirt and penitential scourge associated with Saint Louis, now in the treasury of Notre-Dame-de-Paris

Photos © Pascal Lemaître

This strict régime of personal penitence was extended to his people: from the 1240s Louis viewed himself increasingly as their redemptive king. In his quest to purge society from the moral perils that assailed it the king showed the greatest severity to those who transgressed his ethical norms and abused their administrative offices. His servants meted out extreme penalties to them: highly staged public executions, facial mutilation, amputations, confinement in conditions of the utmost squalour. At his behest those heretics and Jews who stood steadfast in their beliefs, regarded as a threat to the Christian polity, were pursued with the utmost harshness. This highly repressive regime employed humiliation as an expression of royal power and created an often-toxic atmosphere at court.[29] This went beyond contemporary norms of behaviour. Even Geoffrey of Beaulieu reports that many

people regarded as cruel and excessive the king's insistence on the pitiless branding of a blaspheming burgess of Paris on the lips with a white-hot iron, as a perpetual reminder of his sin.[30]

Yet the puzzles remain. The pious, just if austere *prud'homme* of Louis's early years might seem gradually to transform himself into the guilt-racked, self-mortifying and redemptive king of his later years, but as Le Goff shows, the contrasts can be overdrawn. There are many constants throughout his life: his deep religious devotion and moral convictions, his strong commitment to the values, powers and responsibilities of sacral monarchy as expressed in his coronation oath. And throughout his reign, Louis was unswerving in his commitment to exemplifying and glorifying the Capetian monarchy, to providing a just and peaceful rule for his people, to controlling the French church, to exercising and extending his royal powers to the full. His harsh conviction that to purify his people, sinners must be discovered and extirpated, was formed well before his departure on crusade, even if after his return, he became more extreme in its delivery.

His last decade, the 1260s, is associated with his cheerless and faction-ridden court, his pious mortifications and his branding of blasphemers. Yet this too was the king whose last child was born in 1260, who in 1262 was joyfully celebrating the final visit of his English royal relatives with glittering ceremonials and great feasts, who was commissioning superb reliquaries for the Sainte-Chapelle, and who most lavishly marked the knighting of his heir, Philip, in 1267.

What then are we to make of Louis as a man and a ruler? Despite his high intelligence, great abilities and significant achievements, his was clearly a very complex and troubled personality, as evidenced by his obsessive-compulsive self-mortification and manifestations of cruelty, which repelled those closest to him. Very telling also is the verdict of his queen, Margaret, who would characterise her husband to Joinville as '*contrary*' – perverse and unpredictable.[31] Joinville and the other narrative sources provide many examples of this kind of behaviour, which could clearly be very disturbing and unsettling to contemporaries. Balanced against their accounts of the king's merits and achievements, these testimonies provide a crucial insight in interpreting this driven, troubled, complex and charismatic man and his reign.

The reign of Louis IX

Louis's minority, 1226–34: the guardianship of Blanche of Castile

The first years of Louis IX's reign, from 1226 to 1234, were crucial in determining how durable the gains made by Philip Augustus and Louis VIII would be. The king was 12 years old when his father died. His status as monarch was firm and undisputed, but his was a minority government, under the control and wardship of his mother, Blanche of Castile.

Blanche's powers were those of a regent, although this title was not used in France until 1316. The sole guardianship of a queen was a novel arrangement in

France: the last Capetian king to succeed as a minor was Philip I in 1060, and he had come under the tutelage of Baldwin count of Flanders. When subsequent kings had been away on crusade, where queens were involved in ruling the kingdom, this was in conjunction with barons or bishops. Yet this was Louis VIII's wish: the archbishop of Sens and the bishops of Beauvais and Chartres were at his deathbed and had committed the king's dispositions to this effect to writing.

Louis's later biographers portrayed Blanche's rule as a time of great disorder in the kingdom, imperiling the queen's authority and even the person of the king himself. While not discounting the extent of baronial insurrection, Grant has demonstrated that this is a simplistic and over-dramatised view of events, as many of the great magnates remained loyal, and those who did not were long-term dissenters, looking always to increase their own powers at the expense of royal authority and often involved in internecine strife.[32]

Indeed, the barons of France did not develop a common agenda like that of their English equivalents. Acquisitive and bellicose, fiercely regional, and bound still by their strong shared political culture, they seem not to have threatened the monarchy or its young occupant. Instead, as their forebears had done, they vied against each other and against the crown for lands and rights, and sought to dominate the king himself at the expense of the regent.

Who were the principal players? Amongst the complex web of shifting alliances, two Capetian princes stand out: Philip Hurepel, count of Boulogne, son of Philip Augustus and Agnes of Méran, and Peter Mauclerc, count of Brittany, a descendant of Louis VII's brother. Other key players were Theobald IV, count of Champagne, and amongst the many regional lords, Hugh of Lusignan. The English king, Henry III, still holder of most of the duchy of Aquitaine, and anxious to regain the lost Plantagenet lands in France, was also a significant presence. His position as a papal vassal strengthened his hand to some extent.

Their shifting patterns of hostile alliances proved a significant initial challenge to Blanche's authority. Yet the queen managed to hold her own and to consolidate and enhance royal power, a remarkable achievement for a foreigner and woman in a land where politics was almost entirely dominated by men.[33] She had a number of advantages. She could count on a group of loyal castellan families from the royal lands for support, the Montmorency, Montfort, Beaumont, Milly and others. From their number came Walter Cornut, archbishop of Sens, Matthew of Montmorency, royal constable, and John Clément, the royal marshal.

Likewise, the towns and villages of the royal lands seem to have supported the young king wholeheartedly, to have come to the rescue when needed and to have put their militias at the queen's disposal. Blanche could furthermore rely on the advice and support of experienced counsellors, Warin (Guérin) bishop of Senlis (until his death in 1227), and the venerable Bartholomew of Roye, chamberlain to both Philip Augustus and Louis VIII. She had an impressively large treasury to draw upon (p. 317). And she was a woman of remarkable character and determination.

The chronicle sources for Louis IX's reign all portray Blanche as a woman of great ability, of strength and of piety. In the face of much political opposition and

hostility and ridicule from many contemporaries, she displayed all the spirit of her grandmother Eleanor of Aquitaine and her great-grandmother the Empress Matilda. She was not afraid to take decisions or to act on them. On occasion she led armies on campaign in person, and she proved herself an able and forceful politician. Some of her actions appeared imperious, but she could be merciful, and her piety was widely attested and respected. She gave generously to the poor, supported the religious orders and founded several monasteries (p. 294). Yet she consistently maintained the powers and dignity of the crown against the church and was firm with erring ecclesiastics.

The king's soul was kept from harm, relates Joinville, through the advice and teachings of his mother and of the wise courtiers who had served his father and grandfather before him.[34] Blanche's influence over Louis remained very strong until her own death in 1252, although the ties between them loosened somewhat after 1244, when against her advice the king became wholly bound up with his plans for a crusade. But at a more profound level her impact on her royal son lasted to the end of his days. She imbued Louis with the notion of sacral kingship: serving God and serving his people to the best of his abilities were fused into a single sacred goal.

The coronation of the child-king was attended by many important French magnates, but Peter Mauclerc, count of Brittany, and the Poitevin allies of Henry III were missing. In 1226, Blanche sought to buy support from the great barons through grants of lands, most notably of the castles of Mortain and Lillebonne and the lordship of Saint-Pol to Philip Hurepel. Yet in 1227, Philip Hurepel, seeking perhaps to oust Blanche as regent, joined Peter Mauclerc and others in a significant rebellion. Their forces cornered Blanche and Louis IX at Montlhéry. But the militias of Paris and the Île-de-France rescued the young king and he was fêted all the way back to Paris, an incident that Joinville suggests had a profound effect on him.

Through the deployment of diplomacy and money, Blanche now secured the adherence of two significant barons: her cousin Ferrand of Portugal, count of Flanders, whom she released from prison, and her second cousin Theobald of Champagne. Although inconsistent in his loyalty to the queen, this unpopular, volatile and stout troubadour was reputed to have developed a strong affection for Blanche and wrote many fine poems to her: his enemies did not fail to comment on this.

With the forces of Champagne secured, Blanche was able to muster a major royal army and to sweep south into Touraine. Philip Hurepel, Peter Mauclerc of Brittany and their supporters yielded and after protracted negotiations came to terms with Blanche in March 1227, through the Treaty of Vendôme. This prevented a marriage alliance from taking place between Peter Mauclerc's daughter Yolande to Henry III of England, and bought off Philip Hurepel with a very substantial annual income. A truce was also made with Henry III of England, and many of the Poitevin barons paid homage to the crown.

Meanwhile the royal army had been continuing Louis VIII's campaign in the Languedoc, under the leadership of the soldier Humbert of Beaujeu and

with the support of Cardinal Romano Frangipani. By the end of 1228 Raymond VII count of Toulouse had made some headway, but nothing decisive had been achieved by either side, and the Languedoc was war-weary and devastated. The western church, headed from 1227 by Pope Gregory IX, was increasingly interested in promoting peace. In the spring of 1229 Raymond submitted to the papal legate and concluded the treaty of Paris with the French crown.

Despite the crippling indemnities he was expected to pay, this was far more favourable to the southern prince than might have been expected in 1226. Raymond was to retain many of his lands for life, and his heir Joan was to marry a Capetian prince – in the event Alfonso, Louis IX's brother. If they in turn did not produce an heir, then the city and diocese of Toulouse were to revert to the crown. The French crown also took the *sénéchausées* of Beaucaire and Carcassonne, the conquests of Simon and Aimery de Montfort, and was temporarily ceded a number of important fortresses in the Languedoc. A new university was to be founded at Toulouse, and renewed efforts were to be made to extirpate heresy from the region. Later, in 1229, the count of Foix and Nevers also submitted to the king, but it was to take a further 20 years before the Midi settled down under the rule of northern France.

Further north, two further conflicts broke out. One marked the confluence of Peter Mauclerc, Philip Hurepel and Hugh IV duke of Burgundy, against Theobald of Champagne, whose lands they invaded. At stake was not just border lands and rights, but the succession to the county of Champagne itself: Alice queen of Cyprus, a counterclaimant to Theobald, had their support. While not a direct threat to the crown, this sporadic private war undermined the peace of the realm, and Blanche, with the support of the duke of Lorraine, the count of Flanders and Archambaud of Bourbon came to Theobald's aid. Unwilling openly to fight the king, the baronial coalition collapsed. By the end of 1230 an uneasy peace had returned to northeastern France.

The second conflict, to the west, overlapped with this in terms of protagonists and timing. With the support of Peter Mauclerc, Henry III launched an invasion, landing at Saint-Malo in May 1230. Peter had the previous year ignored a summons from the queen to explain his adherence to the English king, and Blanche had seized his lands at Bellême and Angers in response. After the English invasion, Blanche gained the backing of the counts of Champagne, Flanders, Nevers, Blois and Vendôme despite their mutual hostilities. In June, sitting as a royal court, they declared Peter Mauclerc's land forfeit.

The royal army, again led by the queen, now captured further land and towns from him: Ancénis, Oudon and Champtoceaux. As a result of this show of strength some of Peter's allies moved to the royal camp, including the Poitevin lords Hugh of Lusignan, count of La Marche, and Raymond and Guy of Thouars. But the crown lacked the resources to invade Brittany: once their 40 days of service to the crown expired, many of the barons returned to their own internecine strife. Yet peace was established, leaving the crown in a strengthened position.

Henry III returned to England, but leaving some key supporters behind: with Peter Mauclerc, they launched a series of hostile raids into Maine and western

Normandy. In 1231 Blanche and Louis led a further military expedition towards Brittany, finally securing the submission of Peter Mauclerc, who agreed to stay out of France for three years, with Philip Hurepel acting as his surety. The king was to keep the lands he had conquered, including Bellême and Angers, and in a show of strength Angers was impressively refortified (p. 322).

During Louis IX's minority the queen became the butt of many popular songs. She was accused of undue hauteur, of improper relations with the papal legate, and also with Theobald of Champagne, who was blamed for Louis VIII's untimely death. She squandered royal treasure, it was said, she surrounded her son with ecclesiastics, lesser men and Spaniards, denying the barons their proper place.

Much opposition came also from the university of Paris. In 1229 a group of Picard students rioting at Saint-Marcel was crushed severely, supposedly on Blanche's orders. Appeals to Blanche and the papal legate went unanswered and the university went so far as to disperse as a body, not to resume again until 1231, when all its privileges were renewed by the king and the papal legate. The rhymesters meanwhile satirised Blanche as Dame Hersent, the she-wolf in the hugely popular story of Reynard the Fox.

Yet the queen's contribution to the way in which the crown was regarded in France was vitally important. Her piety and exalted sense of sacral monarchy found visual expression in the building works at the great abbeys of Royaumont and Saint-Denis, and later in the bringing of the relics of the passion from Constantinople and their housing in the Sainte-Chapelle. Royal authority had been safeguarded in the early years of Louis's reign: Blanche of Castile carried on the work of Philip Augustus and Louis VIII in overcoming baronial reaction and securing their conquests. But the strife continued after Louis IX came of age, and the young king would continue to rely upon his mother in his own struggles to assert and consolidate royal authority.

Louis IX the young king, 1234–44

In 1234 Louis, at the age of 21, married 13-year-old Margaret, daughter of Count Raymond-Berengar IV of Provence, in a magnificent ceremony. Contemporaries praised her beauty and charm, and at first the union was happy. Their first child was born in 1240, a daughter, Blanche. The king clearly saw this as a major setback, but after the arrival of a second daughter, Isabella, in 1241, their third child, Louis, the long-awaited son and heir, was born in 1244. These were to be followed by a further eight children, including the future Philip III, who was born in 1245. The last child, Agnes, arrived in 1260, although two of their offspring would not survive infancy.

The king it seems never formally came of age. Blanche's role as guardian continued in practice, and Louis remained closely under his mother's domination for the next decade. Blanche behaved demeaningly towards his young wife and did all she could to exclude her from her expected role as queen. According to Joinville, Blanche was consumed with jealousy for the young woman and she and the king,

who were at first very fond of one another, had to meet in secret. Blanche even tried to drag Louis away from the bedside of Margaret when it was feared that the young queen would die in childbirth.[35]

Blanche's motives were in part personal – she clearly regarded the young queen Margaret as a rival for her son's affections – and in part political: Margaret's attempts to exercise influence in the way Blanche herself had done as queen were stymied. In 1241 Blanche seems to have been able to use Margaret's attempts to mediate between Louis and her brother-in-law Henry III against her. The king and his counsellors, clearly under Blanche's influence, compelled Margaret to swear on the gospels that she would obey her husband's rules and ordinances. After this humiliation, the relationship of the royal couple perhaps became more distant.

Contemporary accounts suggest that the king always wanted his mother's presence in council and valued her advice; and although the king was increasingly playing a prominent role, in many instances her opinion was still decisive. She continued to play a much-needed central part in the continuing disputes and negotiations between the crown and the barons.[36] These continued unabated until about 1238, even though some of the key players were no longer on the scene. Ferrand of Portugal, count of Flanders, had died in 1233: the succession to this wealthy and important county would prove a longstanding cause of disagreement. In 1234 Philip Hurepel died also, his daughter Joan, heir to his great fief of Boulogne, now coming firmly under royal control. In 1237 she was married to a loyal Capetian supporter, Gaucher of Saint-Pol.

All these changes cleared the decks to some extent, but in western France, Peter Mauclerc of Brittany and Henry III still posed a challenge to royal authority. The two had been negotiating and preparing for fresh hostilities as soon as the three-year truce expired in 1234. Louis and Blanche now acted expeditiously, forging alliances with lords on the Breton border and leading a major force out from newly-fortified Angers. Peter Mauclerc once more submitted to the crown. He renounced his claims to certain key fortresses on the Norman borders, including Bellême, and promised fidelity to the king. He was consequently allowed to retain control of Brittany until his son and heir came of age – although he mounted a further campaign against the king in 1235, which was yet again unsuccessful.

In 1234 Blanche and Louis settled the dispute between Theobald of Champagne and Alice of Cyprus, to their own advantage. Alice gained an annual pension of £2,000 and the very large lump sum of £40,000 *tournois* in return for ceding to Theobald her claims to Champagne. The king funded the pay-off, receiving in return from Theobald the valuable overlordship of Blois, Chartres, Sancerre and the viscounty of Châteaudun. The tenurial links of Blois and Champagne were thus broken.

Having succeeded to the kingdom of Navarre on the death of his uncle, Theobald departed for his new realm. But by 1235 he was back, and involved himself in a private war against the count of Nevers. In 1236, emboldened perhaps by his new royal status and wealth, he formed an alliance with Peter Mauclerc and Hugh of La Marche. Without asking the king's permission he arranged the marriage

of his daughter Blanche to John the Red, son and heir of Peter Mauclerc, and soon afterwards, for reasons which remain unclear, erupted into his first overt rebellion against French royal authority.

The king was not deterred by this. He gathered a large army at Vincennes and the conspirators' resistance soon collapsed. Louis forgave Theobald only because of Blanche's mediation, and after Louis's brother Robert of Artois had played humiliating tricks on him at court. The count of Champagne promised to stay out of France for seven years and once more to renounce his suzerainty over Blois and the other lands, the king securing several important castles as a pledge of his good faith. In 1235 John the Red, Peter Mauclerc's son, had come of age and in 1238, as count of Brittany, recognised Louis IX as his overlord and promised to render his castles to the crown when required.

Meanwhile Louis was drawn increasingly into the politics of the papacy, the empire and Constantinople. Already king of Sicily and southern Italy, and Holy Roman Emperor since 1220, Frederick II, an influential, colourful and controversial figure, had in 1229 secured by negotiation the kingdom of Jerusalem. His coronation came at a time when he was a papal excommunicate for his earlier failure to honour this same crusading vow. On his return, he had been involved in warfare in his northern Italian lands with papal forces as well as the rebellious towns of the Lombard League.

Pope Gregory IX was determined to unseat Frederick, but his attempts in 1238–9 to recruit Louis, and Blanche of Castile, whom he approached separately, to this cause were rebuffed. Gregory even proposed that Frederick should be replaced with Robert of Artois, Louis's brother, but this scheme was rejected by the Capetian court. In 1241 matters reached such a pass that when Gregory called a council of the church in Rome, Frederick announced he would capture any prelates travelling there by land or sea; and furthermore, he carried out his threat. Amongst the incarcerated ecclesiastics were certain French bishops and abbots who were ill-treated along with the rest. Louis was greatly angered, and wrote two letters demanding that his subjects be released, for royal rights had been infringed. This Frederick did, but before a truce could be arranged between king and emperor the pope died.

Gregory's other great project, to launch a further crusade, met with far greater support within France. Frederick II had left the Christian crusader states divided, and neither Jerusalem nor the Latin empire of Constantinople could be regarded as secure. In 1236, Baldwin of Constantinople visited his French royal kinsfolk to build support for rescuing his lands. In response to these appeals and to papal blandishments, Louis organised a crusade to go to the Holy Land under the leadership of Theobald of Champagne, which departed in 1239. With Theobald went his fellow poet and warrior, Peter Mauclerc of Brittany, along with Aimery de Montfort, whom Louis funded, John, count of Mâcon, who sold lands to the king, Hugh IV of Burgundy, Henry, count of Bar, Guy of Nevers and Foix, and many of their followers.[37]

For Louis this departure marked a significant turning-point in his relations with many of his barons, whose martial combative spirits were now being deployed

against Christianity's foes far away rather than against each other and the crown. For the crusader states the impact was far less positive. Having made some gains for the kingdom of Jerusalem, the crusaders, disunited and with competing goals, broke their word to its local Muslim allies, returning to France in 1240 under a cloud. In 1244 Jerusalem was recaptured by Muslim forces – the Khwarizmian Turks fighting on behalf of Egypt's Ayyubid rulers – and the Christians were ejected.

Also arising from Baldwin's visit to the king was an arrangement which would greatly benefit both: in return for a subsidy which was reputedly very large – although the amount is unknown – Baldwin reclaimed the most precious relic in Christendom, the Crown of Thorns, from the Venetians, to whom he had pawned it. In 1238 he gave it to Louis, along with, in 1239, a portion of the True Cross. The arrival of the Crown of Thorns in Paris, in 1239, was celebrated with a highly staged procession, portraying the French kingdom as specially chosen by God and emphasising the sacral role of the king as custodian of these most precious relics. Shortly afterwards, Louis began the planning and construction of the magnificent Sainte-Chapelle as the focus of the relic cult and a symbol of holy kingship.

In 1237 Robert, Louis's brother, attained his majority and having been knighted in a lavish ceremony at Compiègne, was invested with his apanage of Artois. His marriage to Matilda of Brabant brought him important holdings in proximity to his own. Other marriages of northern French heiresses to Blanche's relatives were arranged by the queen: Joan of Ponthieu to Ferdinand III of Castile, and Matilda of Boulogne to Alfonso, Blanche's nephew and from 1245 king of Portugal. Both were to prove loyal to Louis IX. The king's position vis-à-vis the barons was thus increasingly strengthened.

Yet still there were major challenges to royal power. The activities of the inquisition and of royal administrators had stirred up considerable tensions in the Languedoc (pp. 230–231). Raymond VII of Toulouse was seeking to rebuild his power and independence here and to regain the right to pass his inheritance to his own family in contravention of the terms of the treaty of Paris (1229). In 1237, his daughter Joan married Alfonso of Poitiers, but Raymond hoped to be able to pass the county of Toulouse to an heir of his own choosing. Louis withdrew the military support he had provided to the papal administrators of the Venaissin after 1229 and, in 1236, Raymond re-occupied the region without papal consent. This strengthened his hand as it made him a vassal of the emperor as well as of the French king, Frederick II having duly enfeoffed Raymond with the Venaissin in 1234.[38]

In 1240 war broke out between Raymond VII and Raymond-Berengar of Provence – the final manifestation of the ancient rivalry of their houses – and royal troops were used to put this down. In the same year, the dispossessed Raymond Trencavel of Carcassonne invaded the Midi from Aragon, where he had been sheltering, and tried to reclaim his lands. He had the backing of the Aragonese king, who had interests in the area, and also the support of the nobles and towns of the Languedoc.

Raymond VII now took back much of the Languedoc, posing a grave threat to the king's authority in the area. But the royal army under the constable John of Beaumont defeated him, taking Carcassonne and Limoux and committing horrific atrocities in the area. Raymond VII fled back to Aragon and harsh reprisals were meted out to the nobles and towns who had supported him, whilst the inquisition in the area was strengthened. Yet this royal victory did nothing to solve the problems of the Languedoc, which would remain ready to erupt at any time.

In 1241 Alfonso of Poitiers attained his majority, and having been knighted was invested as count of Poitou. He went with his brother the king to Poitiers, where the local lords paid him homage. But Hugh of Lusignan, count of La Marche, soon retracted his homage to Alfonso and organised a formidable coalition against him – probably at the instigation of Isabella his wife, widow of John of England and mother of Henry III, and countess of Angoulême in her own right. According to an intelligence report that reached the royal court they believed that 'the French have always hated us Poitevins, and they wish to seize from us all our goods . . . and they would treat us worse than the Normans and the men of the Albigeois'.[39]

The royal court declared Hugh of Lusignan's lands forfeit, but the Lusignans were supported by Henry III of England, by Raymond VII of Toulouse, by the Emperor Frederick II, by Aragon and Castile, and by a large concourse of regional lords. The king gathered an impressive royal host at Chinon – Matthew Paris declared that there were 4,000 knights and 20,000 footsoldiers – and besieged the castles belonging to Hugh and his allies. The viscount of Thouars and his brother gave in at once, and in May and June 1242 a whole series of key strategic castles including Fontenay and Tonnay-Boutonne fell to the royal army.

In May Henry III arrived at Royan with a small force, and declared war on the French. The royal army advanced under the king's leadership and faced the English forces across the river Charente. Louis took Taillebourg but Henry III fell back towards Saintes, and then faced the French forces in pitched battle outside its walls. Louis, showing himself to be a warrior-king like his father, Louis VIII, triumphed. Following their ignominious defeat, the English fled and Saintes surrendered to the French. In his haste to escape Henry abandoned his baggage and only narrowly avoided capture: Vincent of Beauvais portrayed the English king and his forces as treacherous, cowardly, weak and inept.[40]

The Poitevin lords now deserted Henry and made peace with Louis. Hugh of Lusignan was allowed to retain most of his lands, although he lost a number of key castles and had to pay homage to Louis IX for lands in Angoulême and to Alfonso for Lusignan and La Marche. Isabella, reported an ungenerous chronicler, was so angry at this humiliation that she plotted to poison Louis and Alfonso. This having failed, she tried to kill herself, but being frustrated here too, she fell ill from fury.[41] She was to see out her days far more peacefully, as a nun at Fontevraud.

The French king had won a decisive advantage, but was forced to retreat to Tours as the result of a severe outbreak of dysentery that affected his army. Henry III also fell back on Bordeaux. This left Raymond VII to be dealt with. He went to Bordeaux and then on to besiege Penne d'Agenais, but finding that his allies were

gradually submitting to the king he capitulated as well. In January 1243 peace was made at Lorris. Louis's great wrath against Raymond was moderated by Blanche of Castile, and once again Raymond's terms were not as humiliating as they might have been. He promised to observe the terms of the treaty of Paris of 1229, to root out heresy from his lands, and to cede further castles in the Agenais to the king for a period of five years. Other nobles of the Languedoc who had supported Raymond, including Aimery of Narbonne and Oliver of Termes, followed suit.

Raymond himself now crushed most of the still-defiant heretics. The stronghold of Montségur capitulated to him in 1244, although Quéribus was to hold out until 1255. Louis IX and Henry III, after another bout of hostilities, agreed a further five-year truce in 1243. Louis was to retain all the lands he had conquered and, according to Matthew Paris, Henry was also to pay him £5,000. This was by no means a favourable outcome for the English king, and for the future, despite many threats from him, in practice this was his last military expedition in the kingdom of France.

By the early 1240s Louis IX had reached the dominant position in the kingdom anticipated by the conquests of Philip Augustus and Louis VIII but challenged during the early years of his reign. His political and military leadership had been established and the barons brought into a state of far greater quiescence. The sacral role of the monarchy was visibly demonstrated in prestigious projects glorifying and sanctifying France and, with it, the person of the king. But now, with a gathering threat to the Latin Christian states of Outremer, Louis was himself to take on the crusading mantle of his Capetian ancestors, profoundly changing both the king himself and the course of his reign.

Louis IX, the crusader king, 1244–54

In 1244 Louis IX fell seriously ill and lost the power of speech. Joinville recounts that this was restored to him on hearing his women attendants disputing as to whether he still lived. He promptly took the cross, committing himself to go on crusade, much to the consternation of his mother, who 'demonstrated grief as profound as if she had seen him dead'. This act by Louis represented a critical change in his goals for himself and his people, and marked his emancipation from the domination of Blanche.[42]

Other monarchs found reasons not to go on crusade and many were given absolution from their vows and penances by the pope, but not so Louis. For the rest of his reign his over-riding objective was the recapture of the holy places for Christendom. In pursuit of this dream he tried to bring about peace in Europe, and ventured on crusade twice. After the failure of his first expedition he lived in extreme simplicity, attributing the disaster in part to his own sins. But his determination did not flag, and in the end, he died in the pursuit of his ideal.

The later part of the reign is thus a marked contrast with the earlier, both in its politics and in the behaviour of the king. The younger Louis was a regal if pious figure, the older a far more austere and single-minded man. The years 1244–8

when preparations were being made for the crusade in hindsight form a transition between the two. This was when Louis sought to unite his kingdom behind his crusading vision and to rule it according to just and moral principles, both with a considerable degree of success. Less fruitful however were his efforts to involve the emperor Frederick II, Henry III and the papacy in directly participating in his journey to the Middle East.

The 1240s was a decade of change in other ways too. After the defeat of the Poitevins, Henry III of England and Raymond VII of Toulouse, relations between these lords and the king stabilised. The English king became markedly less hostile. In Poitou, Alfonso count of Poitiers, Louis's brother, began to take control of the local lords and to build up an administration, developing experience that he was later to use in the Languedoc.

The struggles between pope and emperor continued with increasing ferocity, but Louis continued to resist getting himself too closely involved. In 1243, after a long vacancy, Gregory IX was replaced by Innocent IV, who proved an uncompromising proponent of papal power in secular affairs. Previously an adherent of the emperor, he now adopted his predecessor's resolve to break Frederick's power and provocatively claimed the overlordship of Lombardy. Anti-papal feeling in Rome, fomented by the emperor, drove him out of the city in 1244.

The pope asked Louis IX to grant him refuge in France; Louis agreed only if his barons were to support the idea. This was a clever way of refusing the pope, since the French barons were extremely anti-papal: they had formed a league against the encroaching power of the pontiff in 1235 and were now planning further protests. So instead the pope went to Lyons, on the borders of France, and in 1245 called another general council of the church. This gathering excommunicated Frederick and declared him deposed, announcing a crusade to this end. Although many lay rulers paid no heed to this sentence, bitter fighting between the emperor and papal forces was to continue until Frederick's death in 1250. In the meantime, Frederick declared himself ready to submit to the arbitration of the French king, but Louis never took this up: he was busy preparing to go to the East on crusade, and he remained as aloof as possible from the disputes of Frederick and Innocent.

The king met the pope at the abbey of Cluny at the end of 1245, and doubtless discussed a number of important issues: the crusade, the empire, the English king, and the fate of Provence. This had now resurfaced since Raymond-Berengar of Provence and Raymond VII of Toulouse were planning the marriage of Raymond himself and Beatrice, youngest daughter of Raymond-Berengar, who would be made heiress to Provence and Forcalquier. Raymond-Berengar died shortly after this and Louis IX stepped in to prevent the union of the two southern families; Beatrice was married instead to his youngest brother Charles in January 1246, bringing with her the title to Provence. Just after this Charles was knighted and given his apanage of Anjou and Maine.

Louis continued to plan and to raise funds for his crusade, but in November 1246 a group of French barons, strongly encouraged by Frederick II, formed a league against the clergy and particularly against the papacy. Their leaders were

the ever-active Peter Mauclerc; Hugh, duke of Burgundy; Hugh, count of Angoulême; and Hugh, count of Saint-Pol. They issued a manifesto complaining about the encroachment on secular jurisdiction by the ecclesiastical courts and other related matters.

Innocent IV reacted quickly. In January 1247, he ordered the papal legate Odo of Châteauroux to excommunicate all the members of the league and anyone else even remotely connected with it. The king discussed these issues with his nobles at a council in Lent, and despite his co-operation with the papacy over the crusade he found many of the protests, which were supported by the French church, quite justified.

Two embassies went to Lyons in 1247. The first represented the French king, his barons, prelates, the chapters and the universities. Complaints were made about papal provisions (the allocation by the pope of French benefices to outsiders), the too-frequent use of and abuse of excommunication, the incursions of ecclesiastical courts on secular jurisdiction, and the inordinately heavy financial demands made by the pope and his tax-collectors on the French church.

Innocent promised to stop future papal provisions and to prevent the further expansion of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, but in June 1247 the same points were reiterated by another embassy. Louis's envoys furthermore claimed that the temporalities of the French church should belong to the king for his own needs and those of the realm, and that the king could use ecclesiastical property in cases of necessity. This may well have gone beyond the king's own views; nevertheless, it is clear that Louis took an independent line vis-à-vis the papacy and was as careful as his predecessors to keep a check on the power of the church in France, even whilst preparing to fight the Muslims.

In the meantime, the pope supported Louis's preparations for his crusade to the Holy Land, offering indulgences to support the expeditious completion of work on the Sainte-Chapelle, and sending Cardinal Odo of Tusculum to lead the preaching campaign across the French kingdom. In 1247, the king held a great court with his magnates to launch the crusade, call in funds and gather their armies and transport. The high point in a series of ritualised ceremonial events to mark his departure was the consecration by Odo of the Sainte-Chapelle and the translation of the relics. A glittering ceremony, public processions and almsgiving on a massive scale embodied France's special role as a holy nation.

In the run-up to his departure Louis paid considerable attention to his royal obligations to provide his people with stable and just rule. This ethical approach clearly stemmed from the king's sense of his duties as a Christian ruler as laid down in his coronation oath, but equally reflected the secular values of a *prud'homme*: integrity, honour and justice. In 1247–8 royal officials known as *enquêteurs* (this is translated as inquisitor, but that term is here reserved for the ecclesiastical *enquêteurs* or inquisitors who acted against heretics) were sent round the royal lands to seek out and remedy where possible any injuries and exactions made by *baillis*, *prévôts* and other royal administrators, whose corruption, particularly in the Languedoc,

had caused many problems. This marked Louis's first major attempt to keep a check on his administrators and to improve the standards of their conduct, on which he would build further after his return from the East.

Disputes over the Flemish succession were also settled, at least for a time, in 1246. This was a complex matter, stemming from the fact that Margaret, countess of Flanders (a French fief) and Hainault (which lay within the empire), had married twice. Her first husband Bouchard of Avesnes, a knight, was generally considered to have been ordained subdeacon, and after having two sons by him she left him on this pretext, and was married again, this time to William of Dampierre, with whom she had a second family. Not surprisingly the two branches of her family disputed the future title to her lands – the Avesnes were the senior but also arguably illegitimate. Louis IX was called in to arbitrate between them and with the papal legate he gave the succession of Hainault to the Avesnes sons, and Flanders to the Dampierre sons of Margaret. This equitable settlement was not, however, to be the end of this troublesome issue.

Louis made careful preparations for the administration of France in his absence. He determined that his queen, Margaret, would accompany him, and he left the kingdom under the care of his mother Blanche of Castile. She would later be assisted to some degree by Alfonso of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou, who joined the crusade in Egypt before returning home. To the queen too fell the care of her grandson the young Louis, the king's heir. The truce with England was also renewed, the pope forbidding Henry III to attack France during Louis's absence.

By 1248 the position of the Christians in the Holy Land seemed precarious in the extreme. The pattern of power was changing rapidly and in 1244 Jerusalem had been taken from the Christians by Persian and Egyptian forces, who were retreating in their turn from the advance of the Mongol hordes from Asia. The confused politics, the weaknesses and divisions of the Muslims in Palestine, made it an apparently propitious time for the western Christians to invade the area.

The French king's crusade was the best armed, the best equipped and best supplied force ever to set off for the East. Preached by the friars and praised by the poets, it was also popular in much of the kingdom. Most of the army that eventually set off came from the royal lands, but there were also contingents from Flanders, Champagne and Burgundy. A few knights joined from England, Scotland, Norway, Germany and Italy, but overwhelmingly this was a French expedition.

The royal accounts that survive for this period put its total cost at well over one million pounds *parisis* or £1.5 million *tournois* (p. 317); of this the French clergy paid almost two-thirds, raised from them by a papal twentieth. The French towns also contributed handsomely and many of the nobles who went, such as Joinville, funded themselves. The king, too, had to find a great deal of money. In addition to drawing on his annual receipts, which were well in excess of £200,000 *parisis*, he borrowed substantial sums from Italian bankers. Ships were hired from Genoa and Marseilles and vast supplies purchased in advance.[43]

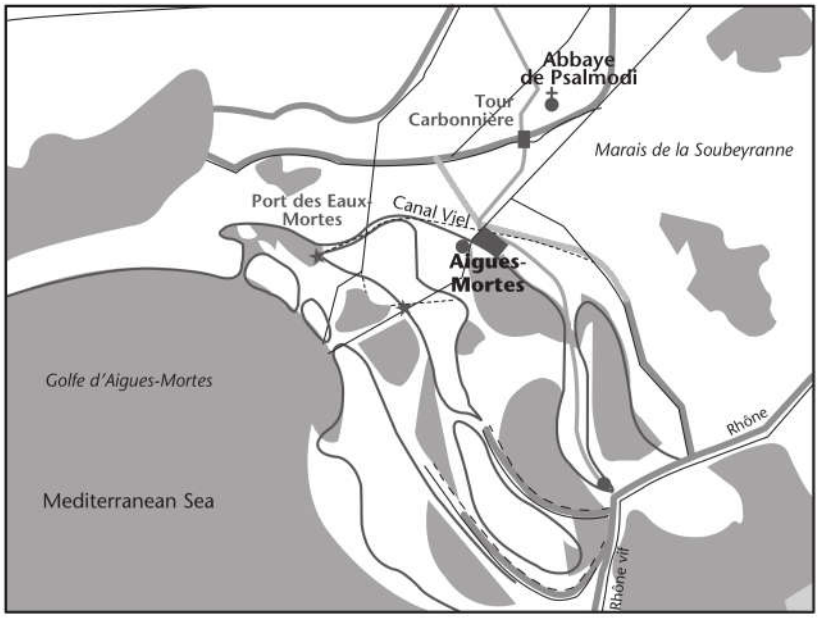
SOURCE 5.3 THE TOWN OF AIGUES-MORTES

Aigues-Mortes, as shown on the plan and photograph (Image 5.3 and Map 5.1), was a new port founded by Louis as the embarkation point for his troops on crusade. Its site, on land purchased by Louis from the abbey of Psalmodi, was in one of the few Mediterranean coastal areas under direct royal control and with a natural harbour. Begun in about 1240, when the king used it for his departure on crusade in 1248 only its fort, the Tour de Constance, was constructed in stone. The rest of its defences were built of wood: the great stone ramparts would not be completed for several decades. The king did however ensure that stone churches were built and provided new infrastructure: a road to link it with Nîmes and a deep canal to improve access for shipping. In a charter of 1246 Louis gave the town generous privileges to encourage the establishment of a commercial centre which would be under his direct control, intended to rival Nîmes and Montpellier which were not.

Although he and his immediate successors continued to invest in the town, and it became a moderately successful trading port by 1300, later in the fourteenth century it lost its business to Montpellier, annexed by the crown in 1349. Aigues-Mortes declined rapidly and became a white elephant, its harbour silting up. A Huguenot stronghold during the Wars of Religion, in the eighteenth century the Tour de Constance became the largest prison for Protestants in the French kingdom. Today Aigues-Mortes, both as a Capetian new town and through its later Protestant connections, is an important and much valued historical site.[44]

IMAGE 5.3 The walls of Aigues-Mortes

Photo © E. Hallam

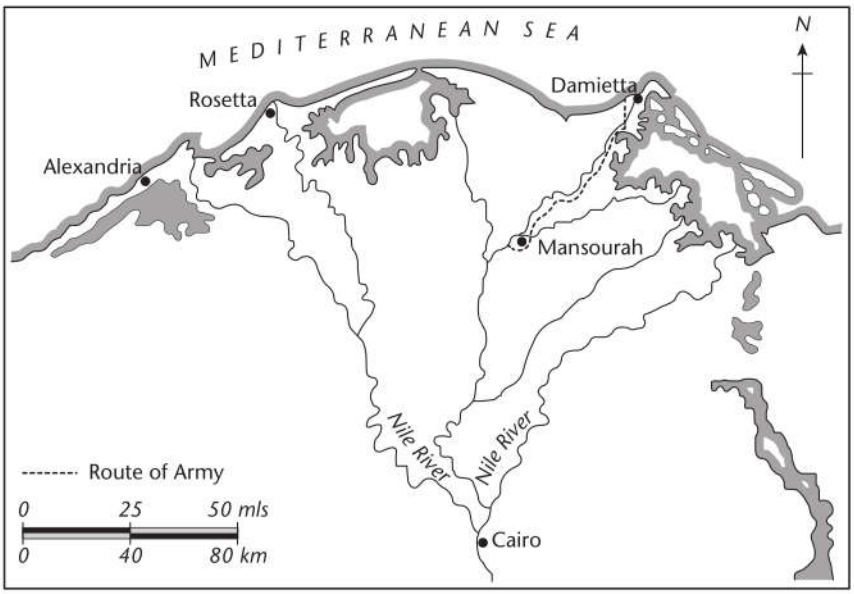


MAP 5.1 The new town of Aigues-Mortes

The army assembled at Aigues-Mortes, Louis's newly-built seaport on the Mediterranean (Source 5.3), and in August 1248 the expedition set out.[45] The crusaders wintered at Limassol in Cyprus, from where the king sent an embassy to the Great Khan of the Mongols. Then in 1249 they crossed to Egypt, aiming to take Damietta. There was some logic for Louis to go south rather than east. In 1218, the leaders of the Fifth Crusade had sought to take the fight to Sultan al-Kamil in Cairo, the capital of the Ayyubid caliphate, in order to secure the Holy Land. Having captured Damietta en route for their goal in 1219, they had been trapped at Mansourah and forced into an ignominious retreat two years later. Louis had a similar plan. It would however have been a sounder strategy for him to aim initially for Alexandria rather than Damietta, from which the route to Cairo was impeded by the great barrier of the River Nile (Map 5.2).

Sultan Ayyub was severely ill, and after an initial campaign his forces fell back, abandoning Damietta to the crusaders. The sultan's offer to exchange this city for Jerusalem was spurned by Louis, who refused to treat with an ailing infidel. The king stayed in Damietta for five months. According to Joinville, a strong body of opinion amongst the barons now favoured moving west to Alexandria, but Louis's brother Robert of Artois counselled a march on Cairo. Louis took his advice, leaving Damietta at about the same time as the sultan died.

At first the crusaders advanced rapidly. They had some difficulty in crossing a canalized branch of the Nile since every time they built a causeway their opponents flooded it; but eventually they crossed by a secret route, and in February 1250 part



MAP 5.2 Louis IX's first crusade, 1249–50

of the crusading force led by Robert of Artois rashly swept south into Mansourah – where the Mamluk Turks, soldier-slaves and highly effective warriors, killed Robert with many of his knights along with most of the élite Templar fighting force. Louis IX had better fortune in taking the Muslim camp, but this victory, won despite rather than because of strong leadership from the king, concealed a strategic defeat for the outnumbered crusaders. Moreover, their opponents had by now regrouped under the leadership of Ayyub's son and successor Turan Shah.

Faced with stiff opposition, the French had now to fall back, losing many troops in the process. Instead of going straight back to Damietta they decided to hold their ground near Mansourah, where their supply lines were blocked and sickness took a heavy toll. Eventually, negotiations having failed, they withdrew; but the retreat went badly awry, and it left the king, who had himself fallen seriously ill, and a substantial part of his army, in the hands of the enemy. The queen, Margaret, who had stayed in Damietta, had taken control there and held the town with some difficulty, promising substantial sums of money to the Genoese and Pisan forces to persuade them to remain. She gave birth to a son, John Tristan, during this time.

During his captivity, Louis IX impressed his Muslim captors with his steadfast piety, wit, wisdom and intelligence – although they strongly questioned his judgement in invading their land.[46] This was a turbulent time in the fortunes of Egypt: during the crusaders' captivity, Turan Shah was assassinated by the Mamluks, who now took control in Cairo. Louis was however successful in negotiating with these new captors the ransom of himself and his army: 800,000 bezants or

£400,000 *tournois* was the price agreed, and a truce was made with Egypt for ten years. After little more than a month Queen Margaret forwarded the first payment of 400,000 bezants, thus securing the king's release; the second instalment would never in the event be paid.

The terms of the truce were not ungenerous to the French, largely because Damietta, bravely rallied by the queen, was an important bargaining counter. But the Egyptians were slow to fulfil all its terms. It was not until the king with a much-reduced army had arrived at Acre in the Holy Land that he was able to secure the release of all his men.

Instead of returning to France, Louis now spent a further four years in Outremer, based in Acre, reaffirming the support of his dynasty for the Christian states in the Holy Land.[47] He went on pilgrimage to Mount Tabor and Nazareth which lay within Latin-controlled territories but although offered a safe conduct to Muslim-held Jerusalem he declined with great sorrow. He involved himself in the complexities of local politics, seeking agreements with the Mamluks in Egypt and the Ayyubid sultans of Damascus and Aleppo, and not least engaging in inconclusive negotiations with the Assassins.

Having deployed his war chest to strengthen Acre's great walls, he also refortified Caesarea – where his walls still survive (Image 5.4) – and Jaffa, at times himself sharing the labours of reconstruction. He then moved on to Sidon shortly after a massacre of Christians there by the troops of the sultan of Aleppo. Apparently oblivious to the stench and decay, the king humbly helped to bury the much-decayed bodies of the victims at Sidon himself, before rebuilding the defences of this city.

Even one of Louis's greatest admirers, Geoffrey of Beaulieu, commented that these efforts were enormously expensive yet produced little benefit to the Christian cause, and Joinville characterised his spending as 'beyond measure'.[48] This programme was brought to an abrupt end in 1253 because, even after calling on the Italian bankers for funding, Louis ran out of money. His flow of cash had dried up as the result of a breakdown in royal authority in France.

France without the king, 1248–54

During Louis's absence, his mother Blanche of Castile once again acted as guardian or regent, with the assistance of a group of leading bishops, including John bishop of Évreux, William bishop of Orléans, Adam bishop of Senlis and Renaud bishop of Paris. Hers was the lead role: she could appoint officials, both central and local, and exercise full royal rights over the church.[49]

The queen dealt effectively with routine business, for example disputes involving the abbey of Saint-Denis versus the drapers of Paris and the bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne against the townsfolk. She oversaw the French church firmly, intervening in episcopal elections at Tours and Soissons where she considered that royal rights had not been respected; but with the archbishop of Rouen, Odo (Eudes) Rigaud, she also resolved two long-running disputes within the Norman church.

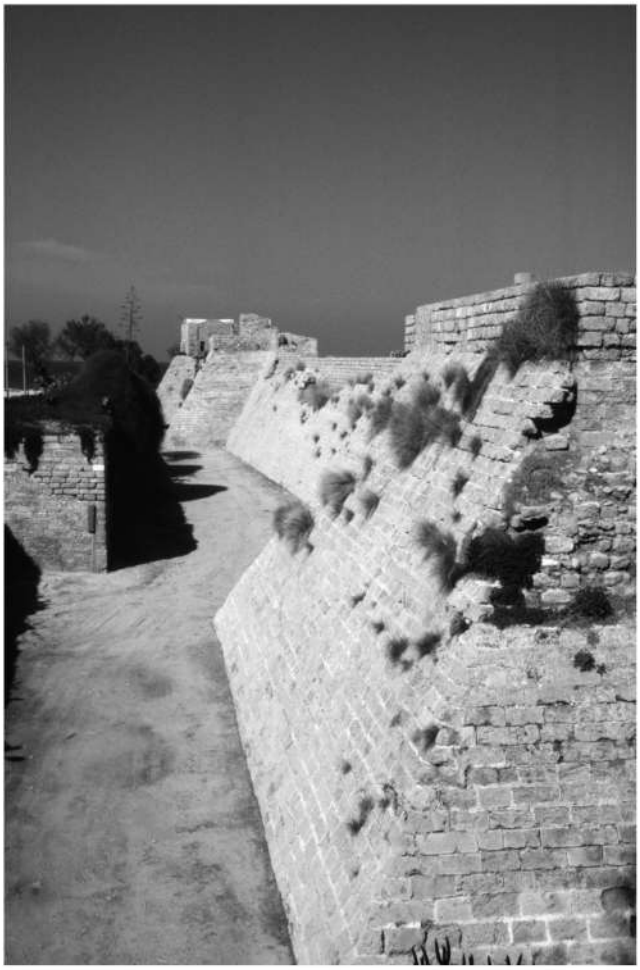


IMAGE 5.4 The walls of Caesarea (in modern-day Israel) as rebuilt by Louis IX in 1251

Photo © E. Hallam

Far more challenging was the need to pay for the crusade; having obtained papal agreement to raise a further crusading tithe, the queen sent substantial funding to Louis in early 1250. Additional demands came from the feckless Baldwin of Constantinople: these Blanche met only in part, and this because of her affection for his wife Mary, her great-niece.

Although many of France's leading nobles had departed with Louis for the East, Blanche was not taking any chances with the loyalty of those who remained, extracting oaths of loyalty and taking hostages, for example from Isabella of Craon, hereditary seneschal of Anjou, and from the lords of Bourbon in the Massif Central. In 1249 Henry III threatened an attack but Blanche drew on papal support and arranged a truce with his brother Richard of Cornwall. Later, in 1252, on the

death of Joan, heir to Boulogne, the future succession to her rich holdings was in dispute between several claimants. The queen made a temporary settlement pending the return of Louis IX.

Far more problematic was the Flemish succession, which erupted once more. John of Avesnes had married Alice of Holland in 1246 and in 1251 he was given an official declaration of his legitimacy. But he was angry because although William of Dampierre had been invested with Flanders with their mother's backing, he had not officially been made count of Hainault in his turn.

William died in a tournament in 1251 and Guy his brother was next in line, but John urged William of Holland, his brother-in-law and the papally-backed king of the Romans (i.e., emperor-elect) following the deposition of Frederick II, to seize Hainault, the lands of Margaret of Flanders that were in the empire, and to invest John with them. Margaret raised an army in self-defence but Hainault rose against her, and in 1253 she and her Dampierre sons were defeated at the battle of Walcheren by John of Avesnes and his supporters. The Dampierres were imprisoned, and Margaret called on Charles of Anjou for help, offering him Hainault if he would crush the Avesnes. Charles was an ambitious man, his sights perhaps set on building power within the empire, and he rapidly occupied much of Hainault. This was another matter to be settled by the king on his return.

In 1250 news of Louis's disastrous campaign and defeat reached France. For some, this was seen as a sign that God had deserted the army, for others, that this was a sign of divine retribution for the Crusaders' sins. Salimbene recorded angry public insults hurled at the friars and the fear widely expressed that Mohammed had become more powerful than Christ.[50]

Blanche, horrified, wrote to Louis begging him and his brothers to return. To maintain stability, she issued news of his release from captivity across the kingdom. But at Easter 1251, a popular movement, the *pastoureaux*, gathered in Picardy, where a preacher known as the Master of Hungary claimed that the Virgin Mary had appeared to him and had told him to lead all the shepherds to the Holy Land to rescue the king. A great armed mob under his leadership appeared at Paris, but their fervour was soon directed against the clergy and they began to attack priests, monks and friars as well as looting and rioting. At first sympathetic to the cause, Blanche turned against the rabble, ordering that it be excommunicated and dispersed, and this was done. The *pastoureaux* then moved on to Orléans, Rouen, Tours and Bourges, where the Master of Hungary was killed.[51] In addition, mindful of her previous dispute with them, the queen extracted oaths from the university and the burgesses of Paris that everything possible should be done to maintain law and order.

In 1250 Alfonso of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou arrived back in France from Acre: Blanche urged them to return to the East to support Louis but they were unwilling to do so. Alfonso travelled straight to Toulouse, which on the death of Raymond VII he had just inherited through his wife Joan. He then went on to Poitou. Charles of Anjou also had his own interests in mind. He had challenges from the nobles in his lands in Provence, Marseilles and Avignon, and he hoped to

gain papal backing. But Pope Innocent IV was far too busy celebrating the death of Frederick II and preparing for war with his son and successor Conrad to give Charles much help, and despite appeals from Blanche the pope did very little to raise support for Louis in Outremer. The queen was so angry with the pope on both counts that she confiscated the lands and goods of all those who joined the war against Conrad: a further significant consideration was it seems her reluctance to condone depriving Conrad of his rights.[52]

At about the same time, however, she fell foul of the chapter of Notre-Dame-de-Paris. This body had decided to raise a heavy tallage from its serfs at Paris and the queen intervened on their behalf. She attempted to bring the case into the royal court following an appeal from them, and threatened the chapter with men-at-arms. The affair went to arbitration, the outcome of which would be the decision that she had overstepped her rights, for matters affecting the chapter and its serfs did not properly come under royal justice.

But meanwhile in November 1252 the queen, already ailing, fell seriously ill. She retired to her abbey of Maubuisson and died there in the habit of a Cistercian nun. After a solemn procession to Saint-Denis, her body was buried at Maubuisson. The kingdom, and Louis's heir the young Prince Louis, came now under the guardianship of the council of bishops, together with Alfonso of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou.

This arrangement failed spectacularly, and royal authority collapsed: a Saint-Denis chronicler believed that the realm itself was in great peril. The bishops alienated the magnates by supporting the church over lay rights and dismissed some of the king's trusted officials; and a vicious dispute once more erupted within the university of Paris while violence broke out in the city. Alfonso of Poitiers was preoccupied with his own interests; Charles of Anjou had incurred the wrath of William of Holland, king of the Romans, for his occupation of Hainault; Henry III prepared to invade Gascony; and so weak was central authority that some of the barons even considered inviting Simon de Montfort to act as regent.

At last the king now decided to leave the Holy Land at the first possible opportunity. Blanche's skill and acumen had held the kingdom together in troubled times. Her son, returning from the Holy Land, had now to restore order to his kingdom and to rule without her counsel and guidance.

Holy kingship, 1254–67

When in the summer of 1253 news reached the king that Blanche of Castile had died, he was distraught; Joinville considered that his expressions of grief were excessive. Queen Margaret too lamented greatly. Asked why she wept for her mother-in-law, whom she had so detested, Margaret replied that she was crying for the king 'who was overwrought with his displays of grief', and because of concerns for her daughter, Isabella, now in the guardianship of men.[53]

Yet Louis remained in Outremer for almost a further year, continuing to strengthen its defences. Eventually, lacking the funds to continue, he and Margaret set off for France early in 1254. They left behind a small garrison in the city of

Acre, which the French crown would maintain until the city's fall in 1291. But overall, Louis's efforts in Palestine had achieved little.

After a hazardous journey, narrowly escaping shipwreck, the king disembarked at Hyères in Provence. Here he met the charismatic Hugh of Digne, a Franciscan friar from Provence, who preached to Louis, teaching him that he must conduct himself in accordance with the will of his people. Louis, he said, should administer justice well and wisely, so that he would rule his kingdom in peace for the rest of his days. The king, declared Joinville, never forgot this advice. Le Goff sees this as a crucially important moment in his life, in that Hugh offered Louis a way of establishing justice on Earth as a way of preparing for the last judgement, redefining his religious and political outlook.[54] However, Louis's actions before he went on crusade suggest that his personal commitment to just rulership was already very strong earlier in his reign.

Louis returned to his kingdom overland and, despite his failures, still resumed his royal powers with a heightened moral authority as a devoted crusader and pious ruler. The debacle in Egypt, his own humiliating capture and the loss of so much of his fine army clearly had a profound personal impact on him. According to Matthew Paris he declared: 'I could bear it with equanimity if only I could suffer the opprobrium and adversity alone and if only my sins would not recoil on the universal church. But to my great grief I have covered all Christendom with confusion'.[55]

The king's extreme self-blame was manifested in the life of strong personal asceticism he adopted, in his increasing emphasis on bringing good government to his people and resolving conflicts through mediation rather than the sword, to a new agenda of redemptive kingship to purge his kingdom from moral ills, and in an increased determination to unite Christendom in order to fight the Muslims.

Yet many contemporaries considered Louis's aggressive asceticism and his close reliance on the friars unsuitable in a king and he was much criticised. Furthermore, the failure of the crusade swelled the contemporary tide of disillusionment with the crusading movement. For the rest of his reign Louis was clearly out of alignment with many of his subjects, both in his lifestyle and in his preoccupations; although these were traits that were to gain him his canonisation in the end and to assure him a permanent place in the affections of the French people.

On his return from the East, the king travelled around his lands, exercising his judicial powers and restoring order: for the rest of his reign France enjoyed a period of uninterrupted peace. He backed this up by reforming the administration of the realm, applying the principles of Christian kingship to his own rule. Most notably his great reform ordinance of 1254 provided a code of conduct for local government officials, seeking to outlaw corruption and applying higher ethical standards to their administration.

This was supported with improved financial accounting and record-keeping, and the closer control of household expenditure. Furthermore, the king regulated the communes, the administration of Paris, and the inquisition, tempering its excesses and placing it under the supervision of the university of Paris. His application of his

own ethical principles drove him also to seek to outlaw the duel in 1260, and to ban blasphemy in 1269, while placing also increasingly heavy legal restrictions on the Jewish community.

Beyond the borders of France, the king assumed the role of a supreme arbiter, promoting peacemaking and unity within Christendom the better to support the crusader cause in Outremer. In 1266, for example, he resolved a dispute between the counts of Luxembourg and Bar at the request of Pope Clement IV. But, as in this case, he would only agree to take on the resolution of such disputes when all parties agreed to accept his judgement.[56]

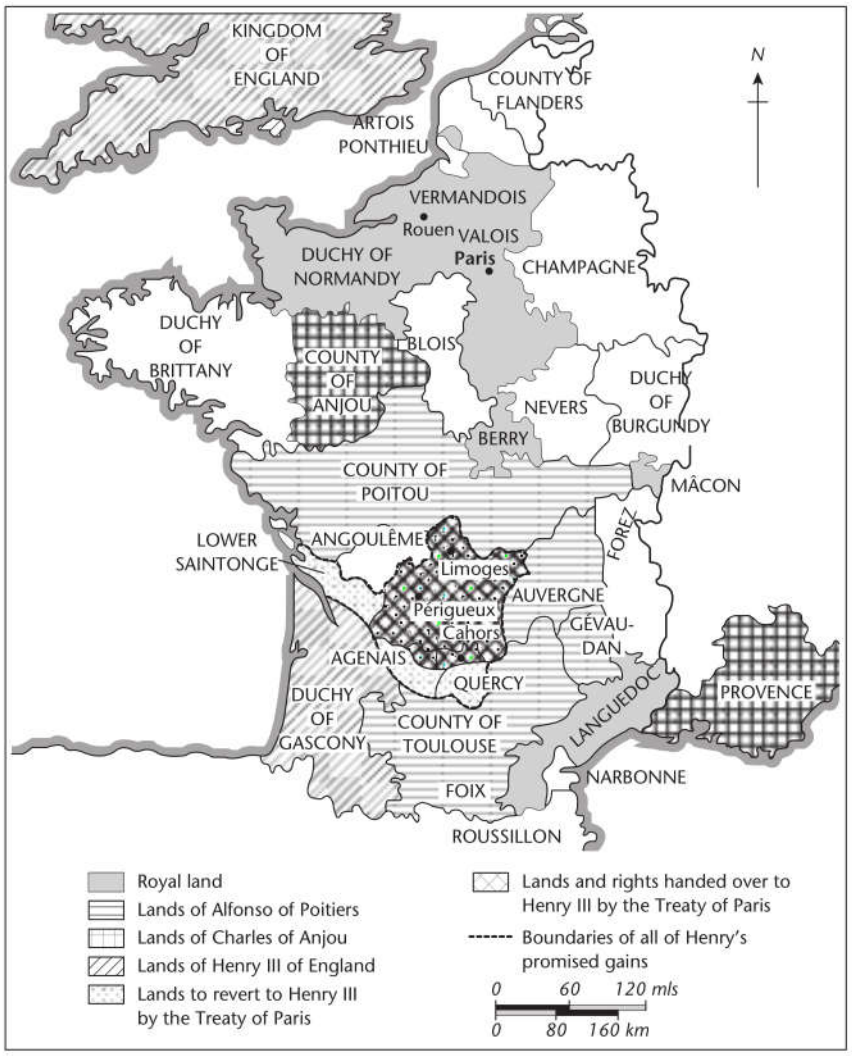
In his relations with the great princes of the realm, too, this was a time to attempt arbitration and reconciliation. Louis demonstrated considerable statesmanship in his approach, although his efforts were not always met with longlasting results. The matter of Flanders and Hainault required his early attention, and he once again settled it by arbitration. By the *Dit de Péronne* of 1256, Charles of Anjou returned Hainault to Margaret of Flanders, who agreed to recognise John of Avesnes as her heir. John paid homage to Charles and Margaret had to pay him a very substantial indemnity.

Even more challenging was the issue of the extent and status of the lands of the English king in France. In 1254 Henry III visited Louis in Paris and good relations between the two kings were cemented. Negotiations continued for the next few years and in 1259 the treaty of Paris was concluded between France and England. Louis's own council was not at all happy with the terms: Joinville tells how they asked him why he was restoring to Henry III lands of which the English king had been justly dispossessed. Louis acknowledged that he held the lands by right of conquest, but said that by ceding them to Henry he was hoping to establish a bond between their children. He pointed out also that he was bringing Gascony into feudal dependence on the French crown.[57] Both were good reasons, but they did little to diminish the resentment against the treaty in France.

Opposition to the treaty was also strong in England and merged with a general discontent with and hostility towards its king. In 1257 Henry III had been refused the help of his barons in the pursuit of the crown of Sicily for his son Edmund, which brought with it the obligation to fund the pope in his war against Manfred of Hohenstaufen, Frederick II's heir. As an attempt to improve the quality of royal government in 1258 the English barons imposed the Provisions of Oxford on the king, which put Henry under the control of a council of 24 barons. The arrangements proved difficult to work and open hostility erupted but, after negotiations, both sides eventually agreed to submit to the mediation of Louis IX in 1263.

The French king came out almost entirely on Henry III's side. In the Mise of Amiens of 1264 he declared that the Provisions were null and void. The English king was to enjoy full powers in his kingdom except that this should not derogate from existing privileges, charters, liberties and praiseworthy customs of England. He could have whomever he chose as his advisers, and he could remove officials at any level. Given his personal and political rivalry with Henry, why did Louis take this view? Doubtless the condemnation of the Provisions by two popes weighed with him, as did perhaps the influence of his wife Margaret, sister of Henry III's wife Eleanor. But above all the Mise seems to reflect the king's own view of his office.

His sentence was eminently acceptable to Henry III, but far less so to his barons and war soon broke out again. In 1264 Henry III was defeated at Lewes, and Simon de Montfort, leader of the barons, ruled England for a brief period. The king's forces triumphed at Evesham in 1265, however, and Simon de Montfort was killed. Again, Louis intervened, to try to ameliorate Henry's vengeful treatment of the defeated barons. He supported the claims of Henry's sister Eleanor, widow of Simon, and her son Aimery to her lands and dower in England, and he gave her shelter. Although he had been called on by both sides to give a sentence he achieved very little in practical terms, but it is doubtful whether the tensions in England could have been resolved in any way other than war.



MAP 5.3 France in 1259

Another settlement of claims to lands in France was made with James of Aragon. By the treaty of Corbeil in 1258 the Aragonese king, who had intervened in the Languedoc on a number of occasions, relinquished his claims to Carcassonne, Nîmes, Millau and Toulouse. Louis in his turn renounced any rights to Roussillon, Barcelona and Urgel, the old Spanish march conquered by Charlemagne, but which had effectively formed part of Aragon for the previous century. James's daughter Isabella was to marry Philip, Louis's son.

Tensions soon emerged between Aragon and France, however, when James decided to marry his son to the Hohenstaufen princess, Constance of Sicily. Louis IX and the new pope, Urban IV, a Frenchman elected in 1261, both tried to prevent this marriage, and the French king refused to allow the nuptials of Philip, his heir, and Isabella to take place until James had promised neither to support Manfred nor to foment problems in the Languedoc. James agreed and the marriage was solemnised in 1262; but the Aragonese king did not keep his promise and continued to threaten the French Midi.

The sudden death of Prince Louis in 1260 would be a great shock to Louis and Queen Margaret, and he was much mourned. Although their last child was born in 1260, Louis and Margaret had long been at odds and their loss did not bring them together. Joinville thought that the king's lack of concern for his wife and children when they were on crusade was unbecoming, and complaints by the queen that her husband's dress was inappropriate received the sharp riposte that he would dress in the way she wished if she would dress in the manner that he desired.[58]

English sources suggest that Margaret exercised a degree of political influence and patronage, for example offering to arbitrate between her brother-in-law Henry III and the Montfort faction in 1261, and 1264 settling a dispute over the castle of Bergerac against the English crown.[59] Yet court politics were highly charged and factionalised, and the queen evidently had to strive to hold her own.[60] Seemingly Margaret even persuaded her second son, the future Philip III, now the Capetian heir, to take an oath of obedience to her, an echo of Blanche of Castile's domination over Louis. Philip agreed that he would remain under her tutelage until he was 30, that he would never take counsellors hostile to her, or make any pact or alliance with Charles of Anjou (her inveterate enemy), that he would report to his mother any rumours hostile to her, and he would say nothing of his oath. This last he clearly did not keep.

Hearing of this agreement, Louis IX, horrified, forced his son publicly to repudiate it, and Pope Urban IV released him from it by a papal bull in 1263. The king now forbade Margaret ever again to make such a move. Checks were moreover placed on her activities when in 1261 he reorganised the royal household. Her household servants were to be chosen by him and her expenditure and almsgiving were specified and controlled. She was forbidden from receiving any gifts without the king's permission.

In the 1260s the succession to Sicily and southern Italy became a major political issue.[61] A decade earlier, in 1254, Fredrick II's heir, Conrad, had died. His half-brother Manfred had usurped power at the expense of Conrad's legitimate heir,

the young Conradin. Alexander IV had offered the crown to Henry III's son but withdrew his offer in 1258; his successor Urban IV now conferred it on Charles of Anjou in 1263, as a papal fief. The same suggestion had been turned down by Charles in 1252 on Louis's insistence, but this time the king's scruples were overcome and Charles accepted. By 1264 when Urban died, this forceful prince had obtained from the pope terms which were highly favourable to himself.

The next pontiff, Clement IV, renewed the arrangements with Charles of Anjou. Charles had the full support of Louis for this war against another Christian ruler, as the king saw it as a vital first step in rescuing the Christian cause in the Holy Land. A crusade was preached in France, a tenth levied from the clergy, and the king permitted hundreds of his men to join his brother's army. Charles and Beatrice were crowned in Rome and Charles then attacked the kingdom of Sicily. In February 1266 Charles and Manfred met in battle at Benevento. Manfred was defeated and killed.

Conradin now raised a force against Charles, but in 1268 he was defeated at the battle of Tagliacozzo and Charles, infamously, had him executed for treason. Charles's ambitions were, indeed, as great as his ruthlessness: he was keen to gain and consolidate further power on the Adriatic coast with the longer-term goal of Constantinople. More immediately, he may also have hoped to profit from Louis IX's proposed second crusade, announced in 1267.

Louis's final crusade and death, 1267–70

By the mid-1260s the position of the crusader states of Outremer was looking precarious in the extreme. In 1260, under the leadership of Sultan Baibars, the Mamluks defeated the Mongols, dislodging them from their recently-conquered lands in Palestine. Baibars now campaigned against the crusader states, capturing the Christian strongholds: Caesarea and Arsuf (1265), Safad (1266), Jaffa and Antioch (1268). The western Christians had been additionally weakened when in 1261 the Latin emperor of Constantinople had been deposed by a Byzantine claimant, Michael Paleologus. In 1267 Louis IX called a council of barons and announced his intentions of returning to the East.[62]

The decision was not a popular one; anti-crusading sentiment was strong, as the songs of the *jongleurs* show clearly, and many French nobles, including Joinville himself, refused to go. He commented that those who had advised the king to leave his kingdom in this way had committed a great sin, for the king was by now very frail.[63] The financing of the expedition was again an enormous challenge, but the pope granted Louis another tenth from the French church for three years from 1268. The king also asked Charles of Anjou to pay back the very substantial sum – about £49,000 – that he owed him. Edward, son of Henry III of England, was to accompany Louis, and he too had to be funded.

Before Louis left on crusade he went on a final journey round his lands, and once more held great public ceremonies at Saint-Denis and the Sainte-Chapelle. He appointed as regents Matthew of Vendôme, abbot of Saint-Denis, and Simon

of Nesle, a leading royal counsellor. The queen, who stayed behind, was given no formal role, and in the testament that Louis drew up prior to his departure she was bequeathed a meagre sum. This document contained numerous pious grants to the poor, the sick and the mendicants, but these totalled little more than the bequests of Louis VIII, a measure of Louis IX's financial constraints at this stage of the reign.

Louis VIII had provided handsomely for his family; Louis IX was less generous, leaving only small apanages to his younger sons Peter, John and Robert. Some good marriages had been arranged for his children however: Isabella to King Theobald of Navarre in 1255, Philip (III) to Isabella of Aragon in 1262, John Tristan to Yolande of Nevers and Bourbon in 1266, Blanche to Ferdinand of Castile in 1269, Margaret to John, duke of Brabant, in 1270, leaving Agnes, the youngest, with £10,000 as her marriage portion.

Given the king's very poor health he doubtless expected, and perhaps hoped, to die on crusade. In retrospect, his last journey appears ill-fated from the beginning. Louis's frailty and weakness held back the progress of his army to Aigues-Mortes, meaning that the expedition did not set off until the summer of 1270 – not a good season for campaigning in the East. Different groups within the army awaiting him began to dispute between themselves, and when the king did embark, instead of going straight to help the beleaguered Christians of Palestine, his force sailed across to Tunis. Here, after a brief campaign, the king waited for his brother Charles of Anjou to arrive. In the blazing heat disease spread rapidly through the army, and many died, amongst them John Tristan. To the shock and consternation of his followers, this was followed by the death of the king himself, whose feeble frame could not survive these further rigours.

Why did Louis go to Tunisia in pursuit of his crusading vision instead of to Palestine or Egypt? Much contemporary and more recent opinion aligns with a chronicler at the Limousin abbey of Saint-Martial, who opined that this was at the suggestion of Charles of Anjou,

> because the emir of Tunis did not wish to pay Charles a tribute as had been the custom under Frederick and Manfred . . . and on account of this Charles prevailed upon his brother the French king, who with his whole army diverted to Tunis.[64]

Yet the point is not proved, for Charles seems to have joined the crusade only with some considerable reluctance. He had his sights set on Byzantium rather than north Africa, he was negotiating with the emir shortly before the crusade set off, and the attack on Tunisia was therefore not immediately in his own interests.[65]

More probable is Geoffrey of Beaulieu's suggestion that the king believed that the sultan of Tunis was contemplating conversion to Christianity, and that Louis wanted to provide him with an opportunity to do so by arriving outside his city with a large army, so that the Christian faith would flourish again in the land of Saint Augustine. The most likely source for this intelligence – which was in fact misleading – was the small but successful Dominican community in Tunis.[66]

Primat points out also that an expedition to Tunis, which was far closer to France than the Holy Land, would still bring the same spiritual reward of a full indulgence. Possibly this consideration weighed also with the sick king, and outweighed his concern for the stricken Outremer.

Certainly, it was Charles who called off the crusade, and Charles who in the event profited the most from it. He arrived just after Louis's death and he and the new king, his nephew Philip III, made peace with the emir on terms quite favourable to Charles at least. Edward of England arrived just as the French were preparing to leave north Africa, and with his small force he sailed on to the Holy Land alone, earning himself a reputation for steadfast piety that contrasted well with the behaviour of his Gallic relatives.

Having lost Louis IX and many others the French, greatly weakened and demoralised, returned home via Italy, more of their number succumbing on the way, including Philip III's queen, Isabella of Aragon, Theobald of Navarre, Alfonso of Poitiers and his wife Joan of Toulouse. The returning army took with it the bones of Louis IX (Charles of Anjou had buried his entrails at Monreale in Sicily), which were finally laid to rest at Saint-Denis in 1271. On them was focussed a growing cult, which, building on the report to his people of the new king Philip III that Louis had died a confessor's death, peaked after the king's canonisation in 1297 (pp. 388–392).

Louis was survived many years by his wife Margaret of Provence,[67] whose influence over him had never matched that of his mother and brothers, but who showed political acumen, ability and spirit: her actions at Damietta had greatly improved the position of the crusaders. She played an important part in the relations of Louis and Henry III (her sister Eleanor was Henry's wife) but, unlike Henry, Louis refused to allow his wife's family and interests to dominate him. After the death of their sister Beatrice in 1267, she and Eleanor waged a protracted and unsuccessful struggle to reclaim their rights in Provence against Charles of Anjou, long their bitter foe. In the last years of her life, however, the dowager queen's fortunes improved. She was given a substantial dower which she governed well and effectively until her own death in 1295, shortly before the canonisation of her late husband.

French society in the thirteenth century

Economic and social developments, 1226–70

In the early fourteenth century, when evoking the good times of Saint Louis, the French people would look back to his reign as a golden age of affluence.[68] For until the king's last years, France, with its stable political conditions, enjoyed a period of great prosperity – albeit with regional variations. The evidence comes from accounts and surveys, surviving in greater numbers than in earlier centuries and helping us better to understand urban and rural life. Such documents reflect the wider use of money throughout society, and improved techniques of farming,

estate management and accounting. They also reveal and highlight the great diversity of social and economic conditions throughout France, as throughout Europe more generally.[69]

Across most of France the economy remained traditional, agriculturally based, localised and stable, with prosperous rural markets which were relatively immune from economic fluctuations. By the mid-thirteenth century France's population was some 14–15 million people, of whom some 1.5 million lived in the towns. While often isolated, these centres increasingly drove the new commercial economy which would co-exist with the rural economy for centuries to come.

Largest of these cities was Paris, with approximately 160,000 people, and a major centre of production, distribution and consumption. Others, such as Orléans, Rouen or Montpellier, shared such prosperity on a more limited but still significant scale. A substantial trade in food and other commodities to supply their growing populations affected the surrounding areas and necessitated an increased use of coinage and credit. Trades and occupations, becoming more skilled and specialised, were organised and controlled by guilds, whose masters paid cash wages to their apprentices and unskilled workers.

Some areas of France moreover produced agricultural surpluses that could be traded, for example grain from the Île-de-France, wine from Laonnais, and dairy products from Normandy, and this encouraged a growth in local markets as well as the more long-distance movement of such produce. Northern France supported a burgeoning manufacture of cloth, using wool both imported from England and more locally produced. The money economy had spread from Flanders and Champagne into this area, seeing a greater use of coinage and a growth in credit and investment.

International trade, especially in luxury goods, flourished in a few places: Champagne, Flanders and the Mediterranean towns. The six annual fairs of Champagne, centred around Troyes, were supported by the count of Champagne and major religious establishments in the area, attracting a major international clientèle from as far afield as Scotland, Spain, Italy, Morocco, Constantinople, Sudan, Armenia and Palestine. Here high-quality cloth was brought down from the Low Countries and Flanders and exchanged for exotic products from the south such as spices, silks and damasks. Credit was provided through the merchant importers of Genoa. Commercial contracts were firmly enforced and law and order upheld through a summary system of justice. By the end of the reign the Champagne fairs were however showing signs of decline, perhaps in response to the greed of the counts in exacting heavy tolls, perhaps because of the restrictive practices of the guilds which controlled them. They would however continue to exercise a significant commercial role in the later Capetian period, under the auspices of the king.

Far to the south, up to a month's travel away on roads subject to tolls and rendered hazardous by bandits, towns on the Mediterranean coast acted as hubs for luxury long-distance trade in goods such as precious metals, silk, cloth of gold and jewels as well as consumables like spices, oil, rice, wine and sugar. All these commodities were highly desirable to the élites of the north and merchants were

prepared to take major risks to realise great rewards. Dominant amongst these cities were Marseilles and Montpellier, both outside France's borders: Aigues-Mortes was conceived as a Capetian-controlled trading port to rival them. Artisan trades such as embroidery, metalworking, leatherworking and stone carving flourished in such centres, as did shipbuilding. Another vital and highly valued commodity, the warhorse, was imported into France from Spain and southern Italy where it was bred for strength, endurance and agility. The finest warhorse would cost 800 times as much as a peasant workhorse to purchase.[70]

Against a backdrop of slow inflation during the course of the thirteenth century, prices and wages remained, it seems, broadly stable in areas where the traditional subsistence economy prevailed. In contrast, those places depending primarily on the new long-distance trading economy experienced at times a far greater prosperity, but also far more volatile and disruptive economic conditions as the prices of cloth, grain, wine and dairy products tended to fluctuate. The economic context of the outbreak of violence by the *pastoureaux* in 1252 (p. 273) was a scarcity of grain for bread. The 1260s saw a period of more sustained economic instability, with very substantial fluctuations in the prices being charged for grain and cloth exports, presaging the crises of the fourteenth century. Louis's currency reforms were a moral response to address the uncertainties and injustices that this economic turbulence produced.

What impact did these changing circumstances have on France's populace? Although social and economic conditions differed considerably from one region to another, estate records suggest that the financial position of the bannal lords, both lay and ecclesiastical, had shown no overall improvement since the twelfth century. As a group, these people remained heavily in debt. While many attempted to set their affairs in order by selling off parcels of land to *nouveaux riches* burgesses or leasing them to wealthier peasants, only a few managed to evade heavy debts. Undoubtedly, too, their levying of tallage and other dues at a higher rate and with greater frequency on their own tenants was a response to such financial difficulties.

There was also a considerable variation in the legal status of the peasants, who made up more than 90% of the population. In certain areas, the enfranchisement of communities and the growing trend towards freeing individuals meant that serfdom gradually disappeared during the thirteenth century, as in the Île-de-France, the Beauce and Normandy. In other parts of France, such as Champagne, Franche-Comté and Vermandois, while a group of privileged peasants was created in such ways, the rest, still subject to services and charges, fell in wealth, rank and independence.

The gulf between rich and poor peasants was in many regions a growing one, and wealth increasingly affected the legal status of the individual. The stakes were very high, as evidenced in 1251 when some 2,000 peasants from the Orly region, both free and unfree, fought bitterly with the chapter of Notre-Dame-de-Paris for their freedom, with the support of the crown.[71] Moreover, while land clearance continued, the availability of agricultural land overall did not always match the increased demands of an expanding population: in some heavily populated regions

a scarcity of farm land brought poverty and hunger with it, while in others, where clearance was still taking place, peasant farmers could gain many valuable privileges and a good living.

The expansion of long-distance and specialised local trade fostered urban prosperity, the rural poor and marginalised often migrating to the towns where alms and shelter might be available. Urban liberties suffered a reverse: territorial princes such as Alfonso of Poitiers, like the king himself, intervened more frequently in the internal affairs of their towns, and royal or princely officials began to erode their independence. Urban communities too, even when technically exempt from taxation by the crown, were increasingly called upon in practice to fill the royal coffers. In 1256 the king laid down that towns in the royal lands should present their accounts at Paris for auditing by royal officials each year, and gradually the notion spread that the king had an overall authority over the towns, just as he exercised a general protection over religious houses.

Useful insights into the impact of social and economic developments in France are provided by a brief examination of one area, the Île-de-France. Here growth was stimulated by the size and economic importance of the capital city, with a resulting increase in wealth in the surrounding countryside that supplied it.[72] Agricultural expansion proceeded apace as techniques improved and profits grew, and during Louis IX's reign there was a major diminution of serfdom in the region with the granting of privileges and franchises to many communities.

The movement of manumission really got under way in 1246 when the king freed his serfs at Villeneuve-le-Roi and the canons of Sainte-Geneviève did the same for theirs at Rosny-sous-Bois. Saint-Denis, Saint-Germain-des-Prés and other major bannal lordships in the region followed suit, and by the 1260s grants of privileges were becoming widespread, further improving the lot of many of the peasants.[73] Even so, in 1270 20% of the rural population in the Paris area was still unfree.

Often both manumission and franchises had to be paid for with substantial sums of money, but cash was extensive at the peasant level, as the numerous parcels of rented land show clearly. The *cens* tenure, equivalent to villeinage, had been widespread, but the *champart*, which gave the peasant greater rights over the land, became increasingly widespread in the thirteenth century. At the same time the rights of the bannal lords became ever more limited.

Thus, the proximity of Paris, the wealth of the area and the influence of the king all improved the lot of the peasants in this region. Many barons and large religious houses on the other hand fared less well as their debts piled up; and further problems affected the lay lords also. Only baronies and a few other fiefs could be handed down intact, and since *pariage*, the joint holding of lands, had been abolished for most of the Île-de-France in 1209, fiefs began to disintegrate increasingly fast. As a result, many of the lesser nobles and knights began to sell off their lands, while often marrying into wealthy burgess families. The flourishing bourgeoisie moved into the land market and profited from the plight of the lesser nobles by buying their estates, as did some of the greatest lords, many of whom were ecclesiastics.

The earliest surviving general account for the abbey of Saint-Denis dates from 1229–30. For this year, money receipts were £13,321 *parisis* and expenses, £14,984. When some of the excess grain was taken into account as an asset the overall deficit was about £1,457. The great wealth of the abbey is clear from this document, sufficient to support 150 monks and 50 servants in considerable style. And, thanks to the organisational skills and business acumen of two of its abbots, the abbey's resources would support a further and highly costly programme of building works during the rest of Louis's reign. Later in the century Saint-Denis too would begin to face greater economic uncertainties, not least from the enormous burden of taxation by king and pope it faced to help finance Louis's crusades.[74]

Paris in the reign of Louis IX

Paris[75] continued to prosper and thrive in the reign of Louis IX. The building boom launched by Philip Augustus's construction of new walls showed no signs of abating: people, whether merchants, artisans specialising in luxury trades, clerics and administrators, scholars, labourers and the poor, were drawn in from the surrounding lands and from further afield. By 1250 the city had at least 160,000 inhabitants, increasing to around 210,000 by 1328 (p. 374). Its infrastructure struggled to cope, the poorest incomers facing lives of disease, marginalisation and dispossession.

Although the king was still frequently on the move, Paris came gradually to be seen as the capital of France, and the expansion of the royal household and administration, very often staying within its walls, had a significant economic impact. After 1254 the king's *parlement* met regularly in the city, and the king's brothers, the great barons and bishops began to build grand town houses there. Paris was also one of the great cultural centres of western Europe, with the royal court at its heart. Members of the royal family, led by Blanche of Castile, were leading patrons of the production of high status and costly illuminated manuscripts. Increasingly in French, these – bibles, histories, chronicles and romances – appealed to an ever-wider clientele of wealthy lay people.[76]

The university,[77] preparing men to be priests and administrators, continued to expand – its 3,000–4,000 masters and students, all needing accommodation, food, drink and clothing, acting as a valuable stimulus to its economy. A volatile body, the university's powers of resistance had been shown when in 1228–9 Blanche of Castile had put down a riot and it dispersed throughout western Europe, not to reconvene until 1231, when it was given significant privileges and recognised as a legal corporation, regulated by the king and pope but exercising a high degree of autonomy.

The masters, who taught in the fields of the arts, theology, canon law and medicine, were capable of highly effective collective action. Masters and students in the faculty of arts, the largest grouping, were organised into four nations – France, Picardy, Normandy and England – acting autonomously and controlling on behalf of their members vital matters such as recruitment, teaching, finances and the governance of the faculty.

Most students rented rooms or shared houses in the city, but colleges, initially foundations for poor scholars, increasingly emerged to provide accommodation for specified groups, often regional. Examples are the colleges of Cluny (1262) and of the Sorbonne (1257), founded by Robert of Sorbon, royal counsellor and endowed by his fellow-courtiers and by the king himself. The Cistercians founded their own college, the Bernardins, in 1244: a substantial part of its conventual buildings, including an impressive double level refectory, still survive (Image 5.5). The Franciscans were based at the Cordeliers and the Dominicans at Saint-Jacques: during Louis's reign tensions were strong and frequent between the mendicant and secular masters.[78]

The great churches – Notre-Dame, Saint-Denis, Saint-Martin-des-Champs, Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Sainte-Geneviève – all embarked on major building programmes, and more new parishes sprang up to meet the needs of the incomers. So too did hospitals, hospices and almshouses, often with royal support, such as the Quinze-Vingts, a hospital for the blind (1260), and the Filles-Dieu, a refuge for former prostitutes (1226). The remarkable Sainte-Chapelle was erected at the royal palace on the *Ile de la Cité* as part of a wider reconstruction which included the *Trésor des Chartes*, a three-storey royal library and archives connected to the chapel by a private passage.

As the economic vitality and wealth of Paris grew, so its domination of the surrounding region increased. No *baillis* were appointed for Paris, for its *prévot*, superior

IMAGE 5.5 College of the Bernardins, Paris, thirteenth-century refectory

Photo © E. Hallam

in status to all others, was accountable directly to the king. His authority extended also to the *vicomté* of Paris, bringing in surrounding areas of the royal domain. Yet the civic government of Paris did not flourish, and it was paradoxical that the king was unable to exercise effective authority in what was fast becoming his own capital city. The reason was the lack of a clear division of responsibility between the royal agent, the *prévôt*, and the burgeoning municipal authority represented by the guild of merchants, compounded by the fact that the office of the royal *prévôt* was farmed out.

Notorious for crime and disorder, Paris was placed under increasingly more effective governance from about 1254. In 1260 Louis instigated a reform of its administration which made him its single undisputed master. The *prévôté* would henceforth be a salaried office, with authority over justice, taxation, trade guilds and the university. The jurisdiction of the municipal authority, the guild of merchants, headed by its own *prévôt des marchands*, was now limited primarily to commercial matters, although with some policing and regulatory powers.

Stephen Boileau, a tried and trusted royal official, was in 1261 appointed as *prévôt* of Paris by the king, Louis refurbishing his headquarters at the Châtelet at about the same time. Stephen proved to be an able administrator and a highly zealous enforcer of his legal powers, at the same time extirpating immoral conduct on the king's behalf. He even had his own godson hanged following the young man's conviction for thieving. This more stable if highly repressive régime seems to have further increased economic activity.[79]

The *livre des métiers*, compiled in about 1268 and attributed to Stephen, laid down regulations for 101 trades, and clarified the financial, judicial and military responsibilities of their guilds towards the crown. A vast range of activities are covered, from cloth traders of many sorts to the makers of armour and swords, and from surgeons to specialised luxury craftsmen: goldsmiths and the cutters of rock crystal. Now a precious source of information about the commercial life of the city in the mid-thirteenth century, the *livre des métiers* was to regulate the trade of Paris for some five centuries.[80]

In Louis IX's reign Paris's wealth and importance as the emerging royal capital was manifest. Matthew Paris describes Henry III's visit there in 1254, recounting his huge admiration for the city, with its large and magnificent buildings, its elegant houses, its crowded streets, its fame and reputation.[81] Clearly this made it a fitting setting for a king who was revered and respected throughout Europe.

Religion and learning: the friars, the university and the inquisition

By the end of the twelfth century new monastic orders such as the Cistercians, Premonstratensians and the Carthusians (pp. 181–184) had lost momentum in their growth and expansion. But the tide of religious renewal that had brought them into being was still flowing strongly and was swelling to include laymen and now increasingly women, who had previously had few opportunities in the religious life. It found expression in France in the spread of the *béguine* movement, and in the development of the mendicant orders.[82]

These new movements had in common a rejection of the life of the cloister as epitomised by the great Cluniac and Cistercian monasteries. Rather than shunning the world that they might serve it better through prayer, the new religious of the thirteenth century were very much caught up with working with and helping society, and particularly with the citizens of the expanding towns. In their outlook and aims they showed many similarities to certain of the heretical movements of the twelfth century and in particular to the Waldensians (p. 188). Yet the various orders of friars worked within the framework of the church, where the Waldensians had been outside it. As a result, they had to make a number of compromises with it, as the Cistercians and most of the other new orders of the twelfth century had done before them.

The Franciscan order was created in Italy by Francis of Assisi, who rejected his affluent existence as the son of a wealthy merchant, gave away all his goods and followed the apostolic life, restoring churches and preaching to the poor. He and his small group of followers had their modest rule approved by Pope Innocent III in 1210, and soon their way of life became remarkably popular. By Francis's death in 1226 he was already at the head of a fast-expanding order with its own centralised organisation.

In his testament, Francis left firm instructions that his followers should adopt absolute poverty, should seek no papal privileges or concessions, should obey their superiors, and should uphold orthodoxy. Within two years he had been canonised and an inappropriately magnificent church was rapidly built as his burial place in Assisi – a sign of things to come. In succeeding decades, some of his principles were not compromised, but on others, both opinion and practice in the order were divided. A substantial proportion of the friars, the conventuals, were in favour of the amelioration of the rule, whilst a smaller group, the spirituals, were anxious to follow the instructions of their founder.

Nevertheless, when the Franciscans spread through France early in their history, their appeal was in rejecting worldly goods, in living by begging, in making the poor their brothers and preaching and ministering to them. They were also missionaries with a strong interest in the Holy Land, and this commended them to the king. The success of the Franciscan ideal is shown in the rapid appearance of their friaries all over Europe. By 1275, 423 mendicant houses had been founded in France, of which 195 were Franciscan. The majority of these establishments were concentrated in the Midi, where the house in Toulouse was established in about 1222. The community in Paris was firmly settled by 1230.[83]

The other principal mendicant order had an entirely different origin. It sprang from the attempts of the papacy and the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Languedoc to contain the heresies in the region. In 1206 an Augustinian canon, Dominic, began to mount preaching campaigns similar to those carried out earlier by the Cistercians. The convent of Prouille was founded in 1207, and this became his base. Throughout the first phase of the Albigensian crusade Dominic and his followers continued their activities with the support of Simon de Montfort and the bishops of Toulouse.

But in 1216–17 an order was formally constituted with the remit of preaching. Dominic now dispersed his followers to Paris, to Spain, to Italy, throughout the Languedoc. Primarily priests and educated men, they were to make a great impact through using their learning to save men's souls. Perhaps early in 1217 Dominic and Francis met, and it seems no coincidence that Dominic now adopted absolute poverty for his followers, forbidding them to own property, to carry money or to ride on horseback. The influences were not all one way, for the Franciscans, predominantly laymen at this time, began to take holy orders in larger numbers and to follow the Dominican emphasis on education for their own members.

It was thus that two orders with highly diverse origins were already growing close together soon after their foundation; yet Dominic, who died in 1221 and was later canonised, never became the focus of a major cult in the way that Francis did. Fewer Dominican houses were founded in France than Franciscan ones; by 1275 they had 87 monasteries, under half the Franciscan total: these included one at Toulouse, founded *c.*1215, and one at Paris, *c.*1217.

A number of other orders followed the mendicant way of life. The Carmelites originated in the Holy Land, the Austin friars in Italy, and both spread within France in the middle years of Louis's reign. But in France they were eclipsed in popularity by local mendicant groups, the Trinitarian Friars, the Pied Friars, and the Friars of the Sack. The king supported the lesser orders as well as the Franciscans and Dominicans.

Some of the twelfth-century monastic orders decided that the desire of women to join them was an unwanted embarrassment; by 1200 the Premonstratensian canons had expelled them altogether. Popular with the aristocracy and higher clergy in the early thirteenth century, Cistercian nuns led a highly regulated life, becoming a model for other orders.[84] Thus the Franciscan women, the Clares, named after Francis's first female follower, developed into a strictly cloistered order of nuns (minoresses). There still remained many pious women who did not wish to withdraw entirely from the world but who had aspirations towards some kind of religious life. Their needs and wishes were served by the *béguine* movement, which began in the Rhineland and Flanders in the early thirteenth century and spread rapidly throughout Europe.

The *béguines* were not a religious order in the formal sense, since the members had no rule, no organisation and no hierarchy, but they took vows of celibacy and sought to live the apostolic life. They established themselves singly or in small communities in property they had inherited; they had no patrons and no formal connections with the ecclesiastical hierarchy. They were entirely independent from men. At first, they were treated with contempt – the word *béguine* means a heretic – as they would be again in the fourteenth century (pp. 411–412). But by the middle of the thirteenth century, having spread widely in the Low Countries and Germany, they had won praise and admiration from people as diverse as the chronicler Matthew Paris and James, bishop of Acre, considerable support from Louis IX, and papal protection.

The mendicant orders and the *béguines* had many aspirations in common. Yet unlike the *béguines*, by 1270 both the observant Franciscans and the Dominicans had

modified many of their early precepts, including absolute poverty. Moreover, both of the main orders of friars became heavily involved with academic studies. The Dominicans created a system of schools in which advanced theological study flourished,[85] and the Franciscans later imitated these so that by the 1250s the mendicant schools in Paris were emerging as the intellectual leaders in the field of theology. The reconciliation of Christian theology and Aristotelianism by Alexander of Hales, who became a Franciscan, was a work of great importance. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, both Dominicans, carried this further. Aquinas was an Italian by birth, but cosmopolitan by virtue of his training and his order; yet his great work, the *Summa Theologica*, places him firmly in the world of Paris.

A community of scholarship in Paris did not produce common interests between the mendicant and secular masters, however. In 1229 and 1230 the friars had not dispersed with the rest of the university, but stayed and opened up their theological schools, to the resentment of the secular masters. In 1251–2 the secular masters of theology forbade anyone not belonging to a college to be admitted as a master of the university, thus excluding the mendicants. The next year another violent riot was suppressed in a way that contravened the privileges of the university, which suspended its operations. The friars, in defiance of their secular colleagues, continued to teach, and an oath of obedience to the statutes of the university was demanded of them; this they could not give, so they were expelled from the university.

Innocent IV tried to mediate between the warring parties, but in 1255 Alexander IV found for the friars. This was probably with the support of Louis IX, who had turned against the secular masters after one, William of Saint-Amour, had criticised him outspokenly in a sermon on the grounds of hypocrisy and subservience to the friars. The secular masters, who refused to obey the pope, were excommunicated, and they then dissolved the university, their corporation, in retaliation. Polemical tracts were written by both sides, equally vituperative, but the friars were to emerge supreme. By 1256 all the seculars had given in, apart from William of Saint-Amour, who was sent into exile on Louis's recommendation.

The unpopularity of the friars in Paris in the later years of Louis IX's reign did much to draw opprobrium onto the king, who was regarded as their major patron and protector. The next pope, Urban IV, himself formerly a Parisian canonist, however reduced the independence of the mendicant doctors by limiting their numbers in the university, by excluding them from the faculty of arts and by forbidding them to teach secular students. Thereafter, the friars' privileges continued to be eroded, and by 1318 they were taking oaths of obedience to the university.

The Dominican order assumed another important role in thirteenth-century France, shared to a much lesser extent by the Franciscans – that of inquisitors. The word inquisitor, or in French *enquêteur*, was used by the royal government as well as by the church for men who travelled round holding investigations and acting upon them. In the case of the papal inquisition, directed against heretics, the term

has taken on sinister connotations. Yet the inquisition process developed initially as an attempt by the papacy to set up a different kind of machinery for dealing with heretics from that which existed already, which was run often halfheartedly by each bishop in his own diocese. Building on the successes of earlier preaching campaigns of the Cistercians and later of the Dominicans in the Languedoc under commission from the pope, in 1233–4 the Dominicans were given full powers to seek out and punish heretics. So successful were they that this was to become the standard method of combating heresy throughout Europe.

By the 1250s the Dominicans had evolved a full inquisitorial method, building up codes of practice and keeping full accounts of their activities for future reference. The earliest manual for inquisitors was compiled in 1248–9 by Bernard of Caux and John of Saint-Pierre. This instructs inquisitors first to find a centre of operations and to preach a sermon about the inquisition there, then to summon all suspected heretics. Anyone who within a fixed period came forward to give evidence should be required to swear an oath abjuring heresy and, having been thoroughly questioned about any contacts with heretics, might be pardoned. Suspected heretics were permitted to defend themselves, but if convicted they were to be given heavy penances before being handed over to the secular arm for punishment, and would have their goods confiscated.[86]

Some of the problems inherent in the use of zealous men under vows to find heretics, and in giving them unrestrained powers, emerged in the early days of the inquisition. Conrad of Marburg wreaked havoc by his misapplied zeal in Germany in the early 1230s, and another Dominican and an appointee of Gregory IX, Robert *le Bougre*, so-called because he was himself a converted heretic, carried out devastating purges in northern France, in the Nevers area and in Champagne, in 1233–4.

So great was the hostility he aroused that he was instructed to cease his activities by the pope in 1234, but from 1235 he travelled round northern France as a general inquisitor, carrying out persecutions on a wide, often indiscriminate, scale. In 1239 at Mont-Aimé in Champagne he crowned his campaign with what seems to have been a mass killing of heretics. Contemporary chroniclers, not necessarily in sympathy with the heretics but horrified by his methods, portrayed him as a hypocrite and a sorcerer. The king, orthodox to the core, supported the inquisition in his lands, paying for keeping heretics imprisoned and for an armed guard for Robert.

Robert was clearly an extreme case, and when Pope Alexander IV (1254–61) reorganised the inquisition in northern France, putting it under the control of the provincial prior of Paris, a closer watch could be kept on the inquisitors. But although methods became more sophisticated and there was less scope for confused, indiscriminate persecution, the proceedings remained secret, so that 'the preservation of justice rested to a large extent on the integrity of the individual who conducted a case. There was scope for greed, political bias, the malice of neighbours, bullying and sadism',[87] and over-complex proceedings could give

highly misleading results. Furthermore, the sphere of the inquisition was to be widened beyond heretics. Philip IV was to find it an invaluable weapon against his many enemies, including the Templars (p. 418).

Louis IX and the church

Royal piety, almsgiving and religious patronage

On Louis's great piety all sources are agreed. The best-known narrative accounts of the king and his reign were written in support of, or to reflect his canonisation in 1297 (pp. 388–392) and provide a wealth of evidence about his pious qualities and activities. For example, William of Saint-Pathus declared that Louis's life was exemplary; he liked to hear all the canonical hours and the mass each day. Utterly shunning the songs of the world, he banned minstrels from his court. His fervour was increased by his sufferings on crusade. He loved to hear sermons regularly and to attend monastic chapters; and he was greatly devoted to holy relics. Much of his time was spent in prayer and in the study of the Bible.

Always kind and generous to his family and his entourage, he exhorted them to follow God's ways, and was a devoted benefactor to the poor and sick, to the friars, Cistercians and other orders. So great was his humility that he would kiss the hands of lepers he met in the streets, and his dress was always plain in the extreme – in fact his clothes were too poor in quality to be given to the needy after he had finished with them. An example to many priests, he died as he had lived and performed many miracles afterwards.[88] Joinville covers much of the same material – the king's humility, his generosity to the poor and the sick, his devotion to God – and his rebuke to Joinville when he refused to wash the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday.[89]

The king's manner of expressing his piety was to an extent a reflection of the ecclesiastical world of his time.[90] His lavish but carefully recorded almsgiving may be the consequence of the creation in the late twelfth century of the office of royal almoner, usually held by a Templar. Moreover, the presence in the royal entourage of confessors (Dominican for the king, Franciscan for the queen or queen-mother) can be traced to the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council concerning the obligation of confession, soon followed by papal dispensations for itinerant but devout rulers permitting them to retain private confessors. Louis's enthusiasm for the hearing of the sermons and the emphasis he placed on them is very much a mendicant practice, and Bonaventura, minister-general of the Franciscans, preached frequently before Louis and his family. Hugh of Digne, a forerunner of the spiritual Franciscans from Provence, preached to the king on his return from the crusade, having a profound impact on him.[91]

What set the king apart from his contemporaries was that he applied himself to religious practices with a far greater degree of fervour than the norm, especially after his return from his Crusade. Concerned by the impact of his extreme ascetic practices on his health and on his standing in the kingdom, even his confessors attempted to modify his enthusiasm for such pious activities.

At Louis's side in his holy endeavours was his sister Isabella, celebrated by contemporaries for her outstanding piety, and a major influence on the king. She shared the king's ever-growing revulsion for the worldly pomp and splendour of the court. Although apparently a retiring personality, she was enterprising and resolute as well as pious: in 1243 she refused to marry Conrad of Hohenstaufen, son and heir of the emperor Frederick II, choosing instead a life of Christian virginity. Adopting the practices of the Franciscans, and inspired perhaps by contemporary models of queenly holiness exemplified by the recently canonized Elizabeth of Hungary, in 1259 Isabella founded a Franciscan nunnery at Longchamp. This required agreement from the order and from the papacy at a time when both were distancing themselves from female mendicant orders; in 1263 Pope Urban IV himself confirmed her rule for her. Although she was seen as a strong candidate for sainthood after her death in 1270, her cult would remain informal until her beatification in 1521.[92]

The religious patronage of Louis and his sister Isabella was focussed on people on the margins of society, poor women, hospitals and friaries. The king's special reverence for the poor and sick is well-attested in narrative and administrative sources alike. He fed 13 poor at his table on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays during Lent and Advent, and each Friday at other times of the year. He served them and ate with them himself, and each Saturday he washed the feet of three particularly poor people and gave them donations. Sometimes he fed the poor in larger numbers; he held substantial almsgivings at least twice a year. And like his forebears, he touched the sick for scrofula.[93]

The king supported many small foundations in Paris, including the Quinze-Vingts, a hospital for the blind, the Filles-Dieu, a house for former prostitutes, a college for poor students and a convent for the *béguines*. In about 1260 he refounded the Hôtel-Dieu at Compiègne at an estimated cost of more than £12,000. More expensive still was the complete rebuilding of the Hôtel-Dieu at Vernon: Saint-Pathus said that it cost more than £30,000 because it was in the best part of the town, and the king provided the sisters here with all their needs, down to the cooking pots. He went often to the hospitals in Paris, Compiègne, Pontoise, Vernon and Orléans to feed the sick and poor there with his own hands, tenderly caring for the sick and lepers who were 'horrible to behold'.[94] He was generous too to converted Jews and to the widows and orphans of heretics, providing always that they were unwavering in their espousal of orthodox Christian beliefs.[95]

The influence of the friars over Louis was judged strong by both his admirers and his detractors. William of Saint-Pathus suggests that had the queen died before him Louis might have become a mendicant himself, but it would have been difficult for him to choose between the Franciscans and the Dominicans, for he was equally attached to both orders. As well as relying on the friars as his confessors and advisers, the king refounded the Dominican houses in Compiègne and Rouen and gave substantially to those in Carcassonne, Mâcon, Paris and elsewhere. The king was only marginally less generous to the Franciscans: he gave lavishly to their community known as the Cordeliers in Paris, as well as

supporting Isabella's foundation for Franciscan nuns at Longchamp. He helped the smaller mendicant orders too, for example founding houses for the Friars of the Sack, the Pied Friars and the Trinitarian Friars in Paris.

As well as founding colleges of canons serving his magnificent chapels for holy relics, a great passion of the king, Louis also followed more traditional and established patterns of monastic patronage. In his early years, these reflected his mother's interests, and in particular her focus on the Cistercians: he and Blanche gave so generously to Cîteaux and its congregation that they had a special place reserved in the prayers of the order. By the terms of her husband's will, Blanche was enjoined to found a Victorine house in memory of Louis VIII, but she decided it should be Cistercian instead: the Victorine canons had been the favoured order of recent Capetian kings but her own family were strong patrons of the white monks. She and the young king devoted much care and attention to the establishment and building of the abbey of Royaumont from 1228. In 1236 its great church, comparable in size with a cathedral, was dedicated with magnificent ceremony.

Created seemingly as a royal burial house, perhaps on the model of Blanche's family mausoleum of Las Huelgas (Burgos), it would house the tombs of several members of Louis's family, including his eldest son Prince Louis; it may for a time have been intended as Louis's own pantheon. Its design drew on the cathedrals of Reims and Amiens, but in a relatively simplified version which was yet by Cistercian standards magnificent. William of Nangis, a monk of Saint-Denis, praised its decoration,[96] but in 1253, after Blanche's death, the general chapter of the order complained about its excessive colour and sculpture, instructing its abbot to alter the reredos to fit better with the general humility and simplicity of the Cistercian way of life. Such could be the challenges of having royal patrons.

Blanche herself later founded two Cistercian nunneries, Maubuisson in about 1236 and Le Lys in about 1241, and it was in the former that she was buried. Without creating a religious house for them himself, the king however continued to support the Cistercians.[97] He was also generous to the other major monastic orders, for example granting Saint-Denis a number of valuable privileges and supporting its major rebuilding; founding a Carthusian priory at Vauvert in about 1259; and giving generous endowments to the Victorine Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Couture. Many other religious houses sought his guardianship by virtue of his special royal powers: in many cases this was an attempt to escape their own patrons, not always successfully. Indeed, Louis's reputation for protection, piety and generosity was so great that all the orders looked to him for patronage. Monks from the order of Grandmont even went as far as forging charters from him, but in 1259 some were thrown into prison for their pains.

What was the cost of all this pious activity? William of Saint-Pathus estimated that the king spent £7,000 each year in alms to monks and friars and that he gave extra in clothing and food. Each year he also distributed 60,000 herrings amongst the religious orders.[98] Analysis of the fragmentary royal accounts which have survived bears out a high level of royal expenditure on almsgiving, and suggests that

far more money was going to certain religious orders in regular payments and alms than had been the case under Philip Augustus. Between a quarter and a third of the expenses in Ascension term 1248 was devoted to religious patronage, whilst in 1202–3 the proportion had been about one-fifteenth. The household accounts for 1257 (pp. 318–319) show that between February and November alone the king expended an extraordinary £14,000 on alms and religious patronage.[99]

These royal accounts are valuable for the human details they contain as well as for the financial overview they provide: for example, the account for June to August 1256 records payments of almost £40 *parisis* and a further £39 on food for the poor; grants of alms at Paris, Maubuisson and Corbeil at 100s. and an additional £20 for alms for 200 poor at Le Mans on 14 August; 70s. to three poor women; and 60s. to a stableman injured by a horse. The nuns of Beaulieu in Paris received £20 by the hand of Geoffrey of Beaulieu, the king's confessor and later biographer, and £55 is expended on five books of divinity.[100]

Yet the king's heavy spending on pious activities aroused much disapproval, as Joinville shows. The author uses these criticisms, which he asserts were mistaken, to strengthen the reader's admiration for his subject. When the king's counsellors reproached him for this excessive expenditure, Joinville tells us, he replied that God had given him what he had, and that this was the best use for it. Indeed, Joinville sums up the king's achievements as a patron of the religious orders with great pride: like a scribe illuminating his manuscript in gold and azure, the king adorned his realm with beautiful monasteries.[101] For those orders and houses that the king favoured, Louis's reign was indeed a golden age.

Redemptive kingship: Muslims, heretics, Jews

Matthew Paris tells us that Louis returned from his crusade with the conviction that it had failed because he was a sinner, a view corroborated by a letter sent by the king to his barons and churchmen which speaks of the need to drive out his sins. This bore extremely heavily on the king, for according to Joinville he believed that there could be no leprosy as foul as being in a state of mortal sin.[102]

Louis also saw his near-escape from death by drowning on his return from Outremer as a very strong warning from God 'to see our own failings clearly and to rid ourselves of that which displeases Him'.[103] His meeting with the charismatic Franciscan preacher Hugh of Digne in 1254, on his journey home, seems to have reinforced his convictions about his duty to rule his people justly and wisely in order to redeem his soul. In commissioning his *enquêteurs* anew, Louis was striving towards this goal: the reparation to be made by unjust oppressors of his people would ensure his personal salvation and that of his realm.[104] His chaplains were charged with providing religious and moral instruction at court, with the king himself arranging the preaching of frequent and lengthy sermons for the edification of his household.

Louis spent many hours each day in prayer and subjected himself to extreme penances, intended to purge his own body and thus save his soul from sin.

Endeavouring to redeem French society, he extended this harsh régime to his people. Showing no mercy towards those he regarded as moral transgressors, he adopted ever more extreme measures against blasphemers, heretics, Jews and moneylenders.[105] These took him often beyond contemporary norms, and of all the aspects of the man and his reign it is these measures which put under the greatest strain the objectivity of historians today.

The crusades had, since the end of the eleventh century, cast Muslims in the Holy Land – regarded as infidels – as legitimate targets for Christian violence. The king himself shared this view, and expressed himself as being repelled and revolted by Muslim beliefs. Yet when he was in Egypt he dealt honourably with his Muslim captors, refusing to defraud them of money. Moreover, he came to recognise and admire their sincere religious devotion, thereafter firmly instructing his crusading followers not to kill Muslim women and children, and even men, if it was possible to capture and convert them to Christianity instead.[106]

Within Christian society, contemporary targeting of unbelievers was strongly focussed on people – heretics – who did not conform to its evolving religious and moral norms. The Albigensian crusade had created and promulgated the ethos of redemptive homicide, aiming to purge society of the enemy within in order to purify it. This justified the massacre of whole communities, the destruction of towns, villages and crops, and harsh penalties meted out against individuals convicted of heresy. According to Primat, the king accorded the highest priority to the purging of heretics from the realm; certainly he gave strong and at times uncritical support to the inquisition in spearheading its extirpation.[107] Against the views of his confessors, in his later years Louis came increasingly to view the sin of blasphemy, a 'hateful crime', as also deserving extremely harsh penalties, such as branding on the lips. 'He said that he would willingly be branded with a hot iron if it would mean his kingdom was rid of all foul oaths.'[108]

Another practice which the king sought to outlaw from France on moral grounds was usury, the charging of guaranteed interest on a loan. Although condemned by the church, moneylending was in practice a vital element of the economy and commerce. Biblical authority prohibited Christians from lending money, but in the twelfth century France's Jewish community, not thus constrained, although often harassed and persecuted, had been an important source of financial credit. By the thirteenth century there was an ever-growing need for investment, which would be met in practice by flouting prohibitions on moneylending or by the creation of elaborate work-rounds, endorsed by theologians, such as notional bonds or contracts of exchange. To finance his crusade, Louis IX would need to draw very heavily on the services of the Lombard bankers. Yet within his realm, even though this was counter-productive in economic terms, he sought to contain and later to outlaw usury on moral grounds, issuing ordinances against the practice in 1230, 1243 and 1254.

France's Jewish community, numbering between 50,000 and 100,000 people, accorded the status of serfs by the king and the barons, came under increasing pressure as a result.[109] Although never expelled from the royal domain – only

from Brittany in 1240 – the king's Jews continued to see their profits from moneylending sequestered by the crown, first in 1228. This measure was reinforced in 1230 with the ordinance of Melun, ensuring that all Jews should have a single lord across the kingdom. This was to prevent them escaping taxation by fleeing between jurisdictions.

Thus, while the king's ultimate personal and religious goal was to outlaw moneylending, which was economically necessary and endemic, at the same time the crown benefitted greatly from the revenues that could be extracted from the Jewish community. This contradiction was not lost on the Jewish communities in France. For example, in *c.*1245, rabbi Meir ben Simeon of Narbonne issued a polemic complaining that while the king's own counsellors knew that moneylending was necessary, the king's own policies of seizing Jewish wealth and exiling its creators were self-defeating.[110]

By this time, the king's attitude towards the Jews had hardened. In 1239 Donin of la Rochelle, a Jewish convert to Christianity, had convinced Pope Gregory IX that the Talmud, the Jewish holy book, blasphemed and dishonoured Christians; and the pope directed the kings of western Europe that Jewish writings be seized and examined by the inquisition. Louis IX was the only ruler to comply. A judicial disputation consequently took place in Paris in 1240 between Donin and leading rabbis led by Yehiel, in the presence of leading bishops, jurists, the king, and Queen Blanche, after which Louis took further evidence. Although Blanche defended the Jews, Donin's views prevailed. The wholly erroneous but powerful and shocking view that the Talmud blasphemed against Jesus and the Virgin Mary was to distort and colour popular views of the Jews for many centuries. The king now outlawed the Talmud and in 1242 directed that all copies should be burned: in Paris, 24 cartloads went up in flames.[111]

In the run-up to his first crusade, Louis developed what William of Chartres described as a hatred for the Jews. He seized their chattels and fostered an atmosphere of retribution whereby his administrators extracted under grave torture confessions for alleged crimes, and those exiled for moneylending were the targets of public derision and abuse. When he expressed to Gregory IX his concern that he was making financial gains from sinful activities, the pope suggested that the money taken from the Jews be put towards funding the Crusade, and this the king did.

On his return, in 1254, Louis decreed that the Jews should live by the profits of honourable labour within their own communities or the profits of commerce, or should otherwise be expelled from the kingdom. This was backed up with commissions to sequester the goods of those who transgressed, and the large sums of money extracted from malefactors – seen as morally-tainted – were diverted to works of piety and charity. At the end of the reign Louis's orders against moneylending were moreover extended to Christian usurers, the bankers of Lombardy and Cahors. In 1268–9 they had the profits of their moneylending confiscated and were ordered to live outside the French kingdom.

At the same time, in the 1260s the king increased his efforts to convert the Jews in the royal domain, personally sponsoring converts and providing them

with housing and pensions. In 1268–9, in the emotional fervour of his preparation for his crusade, he compelled the Jews of Paris to surrender their books to Paul Christian – a Jewish convert, now a leading Dominican friar – and to attend his sermons regularly. More threatening still was the burning of a relapsed Jewish convert and the king's decree that Jews in his capital city must now wear the *rouelle* – a scarlet circle – on the front and back of their clothes to distinguish themselves.[112] Under Louis's successors these already acute pressures would be further intensified, culminating in the expulsion of the Jews from the kingdom and the sequestration of their property in 1306 (pp. 361, 398).

The king, the French church and the papacy

The papacy in the thirteenth century was a very different kind of institution from the papacy in the early Middle Ages. Since the papal reforms of the eleventh century the popes had, as other monarchs, developed a substantial administration and bureaucracy, which reflected a wider involvement in and expansion of ecclesiastical affairs. Papal finances, papal justice, papal government and diplomacy were now major concerns, and the bishop of Rome was, despite his spiritual, supranational role, coming to resemble a secular monarch more and more closely.

The thirteenth-century canonists, whilst following the same general lines of thought as their predecessors, emphasised the papal prerogative to intervene in secular affairs when the ruler had failed to give justice to his people; and the papal plentitude of power was seen as able to be exercised in a political as much as a spiritual sense.[113] Here theory reflected reality, for papal intervention in secular affairs became far more frequent, and spiritual weapons, such as the crusade, excommunications and interdicts, were overused and debased.

As papal government and papal activities extended in their scope, the influence of Rome increased at a provincial and diocesan level, often causing great local resentment as it did so. In their need to extend their resources of patronage to find rewards and financial support for their vast bureaucracy, successive popes began to present their own men, usually Italians, to valuable benefices outside the papal lands, overriding the rights of the patrons and causing much opposition.

The first formal statement of papal rights in this matter was in 1265, when Clement IV reserved the right to present to all benefices falling vacant at Rome, and this was subsequently extended. These so-called papal provisions were justified by the general notion that all churches and ecclesiastical benefices were in the power of the pope, which also allowed for the future reservation of a benefice after the death of the incumbent. Consequently, they were disliked by kings, nobles, archbishops, bishops and clergy alike, as they could constrain the power of patronage of the king or baron, weaken the spiritual life of a diocese and cause a financial drain. Archbishops and bishops also found many of their spiritual and judicial powers being eroded by the papacy and their independence challenged, but by a power whose moral and spiritual authority was in decline. As a result many of them supported secular monarchs who might extend their liberties.

Louis IX took an anti-papal line in many issues, he stood up for his own people, and he took his role as God's anointed very seriously. The French church, with its strong traditions of independence against the pope, thus tended not to defy the king over most issues. But the king extended and consolidated his own powers over it as a result. In some matters, however, particularly in the field of taxation, he and the papacy co-operated in firmly controlling and exploiting the French church.

The complexity of the interactions between Louis IX, the papacy and the French church is well illustrated in the French protests to the pope in 1247 and their lack of results. In this year two delegations representing the king, the French barons, whose hostility to the papacy set the whole thing in motion, and the French clergy went to Pope Innocent IV and complained about the burden of papal taxation, the spread of papal jurisdiction at the expense of that of the bishops, and the frequency of papal provisions. The pope promised remedies, but Matthew Paris, who gives a text of the second protest,[114] comments that it had little effect. Certainly, nothing seems to have been done to lessen provisions, which became a point at issue between Louis and Pope Urban IV in the 1260s.

Taxation of the French church thus grew heavier rather than lighter, but this benefited the king and he supported it. So great did opposition from the church become to the subsidies to finance Charles of Anjou's crusade that in 1262 the archbishop of Tours refused to contribute. In 1268 the provinces of Reims, Sens and Tours all refused to pay towards Louis's second crusade, and Louis called in Pope Clement IV, who hurled threats and anathemas against the erring ecclesiastics.

The money was in these cases being raised for holy wars, whether generally considered legitimate or not. But from the position expressed by the royal envoys, perhaps rather extremely as far as Louis went, in Matthew Paris's text for 1247 – that since the king's ancestors founded and enriched the churches of the realm, all their temporalities belonged to the king – it proved only a short step actually to extend the king's right to tax the French clergy in times of need without papal permission. The papacy proved powerless to resist Louis's successors (p. 417).

In another area of complaints, that of jurisdiction, Louis followed the example of his mother, resisting both papal and episcopal claims and upholding royal justice with great firmness. In the early 1230s, for example, he and Blanche intervened in a dispute between the burgesses and people of Beauvais. They meted out justice in the episcopal city, occupying the bishop's palace and demanding heavy payments of *gîte*. Bishop Milo, who had been a close associate of Louis VIII, felt that his rights had been infringed and he imposed an interdict on the see. A papal legate was sent, and then Milo set off for Rome but died on the way. Eventually a successor of his submitted to the king. In this case Blanche defended an unsatisfactory position with some success, although in a case involving Notre-Dame-de-Paris and its serfs she fared less well (1252, p. 274).

Her dispute with the archbishop of Rouen at the beginning of the reign was more justifiable and illustrates the importance she attached to the superior competence of royal justice to ecclesiastical justice in secular matters. This was occasioned

when Archbishop Theobald ordered some wood to be gathered from Vaudreuil for his own use. He was entitled to do this, but he then had it transported for use in Rouen, which infringed royal rights. The royal *bailli* therefore seized the wood; but the archbishop excommunicated the *bailli* without royal permission, and was in his turn cited before the royal court in conformity with an exchequer decree of 1205.

The archbishop refused to submit to royal justice and his temporalities were seized; he then laid the archdiocese of Rouen under interdict and appealed to the pope. His lands were restored but a stalemate was reached that was only to end with his death in 1231. His successor Maurice fell foul of the queen by asking her to back up an excommunication of the monks of Saint-Wandrille, and by interfering in the election of the abbess of Montivilliers; in 1232 his lands were seized again. Taking on Theobald's mantle, he refused to go before the royal court and he excommunicated royal officials and chaplains in his archdiocese. In the next year both sides backed down. The incident resolved nothing but revealed the tensions between the two kinds of jurisdiction, lay and ecclesiastical.

Another issue was also illustrated in the Rouen clash: the extent of the king's obligations in acting as the secular arm in cases of excommunication. In the 1229 ordinance for the Languedoc, *Cupientes*, Blanche laid down that the crown could seize the goods of convicted excommunicated heretics after a year and a day. The church tried to extend such royal support into other cases, and later the crown insisted on deciding whether an excommunication was justified. In 1235, for example, the burgesses of Reims quarrelled with their archbishop over financial matters, and the archbishop excommunicated some and asked the king for his support. Louis refused, since a secular court had not reviewed the case, and the archbishop appealed to the pope, and then, with the backing of a provincial church council, complained to the king.

The king with baronial support protested to the pope at the refusal of the archbishop to appear in the royal court. The province, Reims, was then laid under interdict by the provincial council and the pope complained that it was an innovation to cite clergy before the secular courts in temporal affairs. But he did not press the matter too strongly since he needed Louis's support against Frederick II. In 1236 Louis settled the Reims dispute himself, and in 1237 he gained from the pope exemption from excommunication for himself and his family, which greatly strengthened his hand.

Later in the reign, when the French bishops asked him to command his officials to enforce sentences of excommunication for them he refused, unless he had first judged whether the sentences were justified. In about 1263, he reiterated to a group of prelates that he would not seize the goods of excommunicates without certain proof of their guilt, to ensure that churchmen were not meting out unjust treatment.[115] In 1270 he threatened to seize the temporalities of the see of Clermont because the bishop was issuing false coinage and excommunicating protesters. The king was not only deciding whether excommunication was justified in this case, but, having done so, he was threatening constraints to back up

his decision. The bishop's counterfeiting of coins had arguably laid him open to such treatment, but it still illustrates the hard line taken by the king against erring churchmen throughout his reign, so that all ecclesiastics were made subject to the laws of the land in secular matters.

The king did not, however, put forward the right to legislate for the whole French church, as was long thought. The Pragmatic Sanction, an ordinance supposedly issued by the king in 1269 and forbidding collations, simony and excessive taxes going from the French church to Rome, was in fact forged in the fifteenth century, probably in support of the claims of Charles VII over the church. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was regarded as one of the chief planks of the liberties of the Gallican church, but it has no value as evidence for thirteenth-century conditions.

In his general political dealings, the king managed to remain on good terms with a papacy that could not deny his personal piety, but which he only supported when it suited his own ends: good order in the French church, the upholding of his royal power and the recapture of the Holy Land from the infidel. Louis remained uncommitted in the early years of the struggle between Frederick II and the papacy; not until Frederick imprisoned a number of French clergy did Louis protest strongly and then the emperor, fearing to alienate the king, let them go.

Innocent IV, elected in 1243, tried to take refuge from his political problems in France; but the king tried without success to reconcile Innocent and Frederick. On his return home from crusade Louis continued uncommitted in the struggle caused by the pope's attempts to wipe out the Hohenstaufen; and, mindful of this family's rights, he refused Innocent's offer of the crown of Sicily for his brother Charles of Anjou in 1252, which was withdrawn by Alexander IV in 1258. This more pacific pope co-operated with Louis in settling the quarrel of the secular and mendicant masters in the university of Paris in 1256 (p. 417). Alexander was succeeded by an aggressive Frenchman, Urban IV, who renewed the offer of Sicily to Charles of Anjou, and this time Louis was persuaded to throw all his weight behind the papal cause. It was thus that Charles became king of Sicily and papal champion.

Louis's ecclesiastical policy was highly successful. He carried to considerable lengths the attempts of his predecessors to dominate and control the French church. He kept his own clergy firmly in line, he supervised elections and excommunications, he checked the spread of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. With papal support, he mulcted the French church to pay for his crusades.

His personal piety and yet his strength of purpose where his own interests were concerned made him almost impossible to resist. He maintained an independent line against the papacy, drawing on the hostility of the French people to the growth of papal government to check its spread in his kingdom, even whilst pursuing higher spiritual aims and living an ascetic life that put many clerics to shame. Perhaps he would have been astonished, and perhaps horrified, at the outcome of many of his policies, of the dramatic extension of royal power over the church by his grandson Philip IV (p. 417). Nevertheless, his actions made such later developments possible.

The consolidation of royal power

The image of monarchy

In Louis IX's reign the prestige of the French crown reached great heights inside and outside the kingdom, in part as a response to greatly increased royal power and wealth, but in part also as a reflection of Louis's reputation as a pious and just monarch. In his later years, his ascetic lifestyle and thrifty court culture elicited criticism from those who thought this unsuitable in a king, and his harsh measures to purify society clearly engendered fear. Yet this is only one part of the picture. Louis was highly conscious of the vital importance of fostering the image of monarchy, and in doing this was able to draw on both his mother's legacy of glittering royal ceremonial and grand buildings and his own conception of sacral monarchy, expressed through the cult of relics and embodying the notion that the French people had been chosen by God.

A century earlier, financial constraints had ensured that bread, wine and gaiety rather than ostentatious display prevailed at Louis VII's court (p. 148); and subsequently, despite his vastly increased resources, Philip Augustus had maintained a frugal household. Blanche of Castile, however, drew on her Plantagenet and Castilian heritage and established a magnificent and cultured court in France.[116] At last the reputation of the French for learning and culture, the notion of *la douce France*, began to be enmeshed with the image of the French monarchy.[117]

A highly-educated and active patron with a love of splendour, Blanche's court was 'literary, cultured and chivalric'.[118] The queen loved music and poetry, and singers and *trouvères* were much in evidence; but so too were priests to support the spiritual life and liturgical rituals of the court and scholars to provide intellectual debate and stimulus. Sumptuous religious manuscripts were a central element in this glittering court culture, and Blanche was given or commissioned many of these, most notably highly illuminated moralised bibles with commentaries on rulership and morality. An example is the magnificent Toledo bible, created perhaps for presentation to Louis when he assumed royal powers in 1234 (Image 5.6).[119]

As Louis's way of life and personal tastes become increasingly austere through the course of his reign, the practices in his household followed. Devotional music held sway, and by the 1260s minstrels and *jongleurs* were banned from court. Several of Louis's biographers relate that he compelled a young squire with a taste for worldly songs to learn hymns to the Virgin Mary, and his entourage was compelled to listen endlessly to sermons.[120] The books in his royal library, created in imitation of the sultan of Egypt's collection, reflected his personal taste: edifying and plainly produced patristic texts and lives of saints. However, in its public face his monarchy retained its splendour, with impressive buildings, ostentatious set-piece ceremonials, splendid banquets, and the creation of lavish illuminated devotional books and reliquaries for the Sainte-Chapelle.[121]

In his coronation ceremony, the king was portrayed as *rex christianissimus*, a most Christian king and defender of the church.[122] The holy oil with which he was

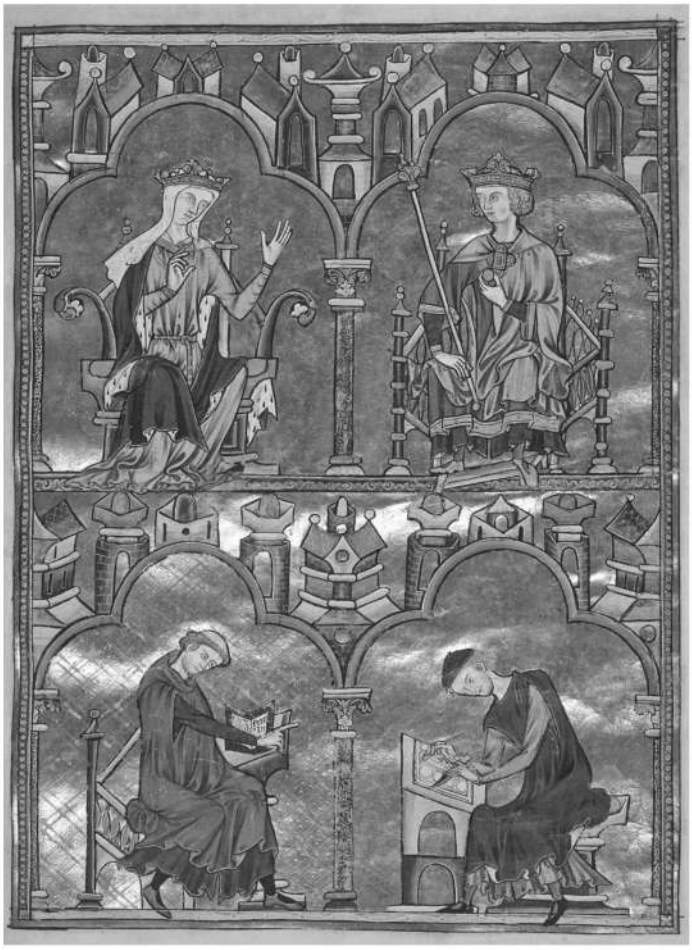


IMAGE 5.6 Detail from a moralized bible of Saint Louis, before 1234, depicting the young king and his mother Blanche of Castile

© The Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.240, fol. 8r. Purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913) in 1906

anointed was linked with Clovis, France's first Christian monarch, and although not a priest, the king took communion of both bread and wine, as priests did, reflecting his special sacral status. A superb, although never-used, illuminated coronation order of service (*ordo*) created in about 1250 for the bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne depicts each stage in the ritual in magnificent fashion, emphasising the politico-religious image of the French king.[123] Inscriptions on the royal coins issued in the 1260s linked the king's shield directly with a cross and thus the rule of Christ, while the healing touch, curing the king's evil (scrofula), was a further manifestation of the sacral powers of the royal office.[124]

Early in the reign Blanche and Louis gave visual expression both to the sacred attributes of kingship and to their own personal piety in a series of magnificent church buildings. The Cistercians, strongly favoured by Blanche, as by her father King Alfonso VIII of Castile, were important recipients of royal patronage: Blanche oversaw the creation of the three great abbeys of Royaumont, Le Lys and Maubuisson (p. 304). Like his Capetian forebears, the king was regularly involved in showy religious ceremonials, such as the consecration of these major royal foundations.

In 1231, following consultations between its Abbot Odo Clément with Blanche and the king, major new work began at Saint-Denis, not least to provide the space now needed to accommodate the royal tombs in the abbey church. Its first stage completed by about 1254, this manifested a splendour of style befitting the royal necropolis. To complete and reimagine the scheme first envisaged a century earlier, the architect now destroyed what was still left of the Romanesque church above ground. Drawing stylistically on recent additions to Notre-Dame, including the upper levels of the west façade, he built on Abbot Suger's work to create the effect of a glass wall, with slim, light piers and luminous stained glass. The immediate success of the design – today seen as the first major example of the rayonnant style – was considerable, and led to a royal commission for the same architect at the lavish new royal chapel at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, completed in 1238.[125]

It is doubtful whether Louis contributed as much in financial terms to the reconstruction of Saint-Denis as was once thought, but the connections of the king and abbey were just as strong as in the days of Louis VII and Philip Augustus, now regarded by the monks as the abbey's greatest benefactors (pp. 199–203). Royal coats of arms adorned the church, much of the elaborate regalia of the crown was kept there, and in 1258 the abbey was exempted from the need to provide hospitality for the king, the *gîte*, on his frequent visits – a valuable concession.[126] William of Nangis recounts that when the king fell ill in 1244 he could be cured only through a display of the bones of Saints Denis, Eleutherius and Rusticus at the abbey. Such a step, William suggested, could be taken only when king or kingdom were at risk – for the patron saint of the house was the special defender of France and the Gallic people.[127]

After a hiatus in building during the troubled abbacy of Henry Mallet, work on rebuilding the church recommenced after 1258, under the direction of his successor abbot Matthew of Vendôme, an able administrator and trusted adviser of the king. Substantially completed by the 1270s, its final dedication was in 1281. Work was sufficiently advanced by 1264 to allow Louis, assisted by and perhaps guided by Matthew, to translate the bones of his royal predecessors into newly-completed tombs at the crossing of the church, in a spectacular affirmation of dynastic power. This scheme was remarkable in its scale, ambition and in the quality of the workmanship: 16 new recumbent tomb effigies for rulers previously buried beneath the main altar were created (Image 5.7), culminating in a massive funerary monument commemorating Dagobert I, the abbey's founder.

IMAGE 5.7 The abbey of Saint-Denis: royal tombs

Photo © E. Hallam

According to William of Nangis, a monk of the house, who later wrote a guidebook to this necropolis, Louis himself stipulated the layout, placing the Merovingian and Carolingian monarchs to the south of the main altar, and the Robertines and Capetians to the north; Philip Augustus and Louis VIII were left to

the east of the altar between the others, symbolising perhaps the unity of the two races.[128] Later the pattern of tombs was disturbed, but for the rest of the Middle Ages only members of the royal dynasty would be buried here.[129]

Meanwhile Primat, a monk of Saint-Denis, was industriously compiling the *Roman des Rois*, a vernacular history up to 1223 that would later become the core of the *Grandes Chroniques de France*. Drawing together the Latin texts in Saint-Denis's library, Primat transformed them into a major history of France, celebrating its Capetian monarchs and linking them with their Merovingian and Carolingian predecessors. It emphasised Capetian links with Charlemagne and reaffirmed the story of the transfer of its holy relics by Charles the Bald (pp. 202–203). The completed *Roman* was presented to Philip III in 1274 and would prove a great success with a wide audience in the regions to the north of the Loire. It seems likely that Louis himself commissioned it: it has strong conceptual links with the rearrangement of the tombs.[130]

Louis's increasing pride in his Carolingian heritage is reflected in other literary works as well. In the 1240s the Dominican friar Vincent of Beauvais, an associate of the king, had compiled his *Speculum Historiale*, an encyclopaedic work of history, with the king's encouragement; a later version produced shortly after Louis's return from the crusade was updated to stress the links of the Capetian dynasty with Charlemagne.[131]

The king, like Philip Augustus before him, followed the idea set out in Charlemagne's false donation and placed four gold besants on the altar each year; and before he went on crusade in 1248 and 1270 he went to Saint-Denis and received from the abbot the *oriflamme*, supposedly Charlemagne's standard. Joinville stresses Louis's devotion to this banner: in 1249, when during the landing at Damietta he saw it being threatened by the crusaders' Muslim opponents, he rushed to rescue it, leaping into the sea fully armed to support its defenders on the shore.[132] The crusading and dynastic links with the king and Saint-Denis were thus reinforced throughout the reign, and its monks were to be eulogists of the king in death as in life.

Another vital animating force in Louis's personal and political life was his passion for the saints and relics, which would play a defining part in shaping the Capetian monarchy's sacral image. The king's deep interest originated perhaps in the illuminated moralised bibles which had featured in his early education. Saints were seen by contemporaries as both exemplars of pious Christian conduct and as mediators between God and humankind, and relics, viewed as their material remains, were the focus of their cults. As well as going twice on crusade – the ultimate act of pilgrimage – during his reign Louis made many visits to honour saints and their relics within France. For example, he went to Vézelay, where St Mary Magdalene was venerated, in 1263 (as on other occasions), and to Mont-Saint-Michel in 1256. In 1244, the king was accompanied by his mother and all of his brothers on a pilgrimage to Rocamadour in the county of Toulouse, a shrine which had been much revered by their Plantagenet and Castilian forbears.[133]

The greatest reverence of all was accorded to relics associated with Christ's passion, and between 1239 and 1242 the Capetian dynasty acquired a highly prestigious collection of these, around which Louis founded an impressive cult. In 1238, the king bought the crown of thorns from the Latin emperor of Constantinople, a spectacular promotional coup which cost him more than £150,000 *parisis*, more than half of his annual income. Much of this sum was required to redeem the relics from the Venetians, to whom the hard-pressed emperor, Baldwin, had pawned them. The crown of thorns would be joined by part of the true cross and numerous other relics of the passion – some of dubious authenticity – purchased from the same source in 1241 and 1242.

In 1239, when the crown of thorns arrived in France, the king went out to Sens to receive it. Barefoot and wearing a simple tunic, he and his brother Robert of Artois bore it in its reliquary around the city, to the celebrations of the people. More magnificent still was its entry into Paris, where vast crowds, exhorted by the clergy to repent of their sins, thronged to see the royal procession. Its culmination was when the king, raised up on a huge platform, revealed the crown of thorns to his people.

Similar scenes greeted the arrival of the true cross in 1241, and three feast days were established each year for rituals to venerate these relics. Their presence was portrayed as a sign of God's special favour towards Louis and his subjects. Walter Cornut, archbishop of Sens, close associate of the king and chief orchestrator of the ceremonials, declared that France had been singled out for the veneration of the relics of the passion, and that the crown of thorns was the special glory of the whole kingdom. To contemporaries, Paris had become the new Jerusalem.[134]

Such outstanding and prestigious objects required a fitting setting. Louis, working it seems with his mother Blanche and with Walter Cornut, responded by founding the Sainte-Chapelle in the royal palace on the *Ile de la Cité* – although the extent of the king's involvement with the details of the design is unclear. The chapel's purpose was to house the relics in magnificent style and to intercede for the souls of the royal family. Built probably between 1239 and 1248, at a cost of more than £40,000 *tournois*,[135] this became at once a site of pilgrimage and a focus for the cult of Capetian kingship – an assertion of sacral sovereignty. In a bull of confirmation, Pope Innocent IV stated in 1244 that Christ had honoured Louis with his own crown.[136] Even so, the name by which it is now known was not given to it until more than a century later – contemporaries knew it as the royal or palace chapel.

What we see today (Image 5.8) is a greatly restored version of this extraordinary building. Severely damaged by fire in 1630, vandalised during the French Revolution and then used as an archive, it was heavily remodelled in the mid-nineteenth century. Yet seemingly much of the medieval fabric remains, and while the lower chapel has been much altered, the upper level retains the essence of the original decorative scheme.

Its style located it very much within contemporary rayonnant architecture in the Paris area and its function was rooted in the many royal chapels in Capetian

IMAGE 5.8 The Sainte-Chapelle, Paris: interior of upper chapel

Photo © E. Hallam

palaces. But in its ambition and symbolism the Sainte-Chapelle was different. Its role as a palatine chapel reflected those founded by Charlemagne himself at Aix-la-Chapelle, and more recently by the Byzantine Emperors at Constantinople. Its scale, too, and the extreme richness of its decoration were designed to overawe.

Branner characterised it as 'a reliquary of monumental size',[137] a stone filigree finely wrought like metalwork, supporting magnificent carvings and stained glass, richly encrusted with gold and jewels, frescoes and enamels. In this emphasis on ornamentation over structure it departed from Saint-Denis; and its stylistic forms, easily reproducible, and associated with the monarchy, were to be hugely influential.[138]

At the centre of the royal palace in a great courtyard where people could gather in great numbers for major feasts such as Easter, the chapel became a key destination in the many ceremonial public processions around the churches of Paris. Attracted by a love of spectacle and by the spiritual rewards of major indulgences, the crowds would pay their dues to the foundation. A few people were able to participate in the showpiece liturgical processions within the chapel alongside the king, his court and clergy; at other times it was opened up to the poor and sick.

A programme of prayer and intercession focused on the upper chapel and its precious contents, housed in a massive and magnificent reliquary chasse evoking the Ark of the Covenant. Later in his reign the king would add further relics to his collection. A single reliquary from the 1260s survives, a testimony to the

quality and splendour of the treasures with which he endowed the chapel. On special occasions Louis took the sacred objects out of their reliquaries, and from the raised entrance to the upper chapel revealed them to the throngs below. Yet this was also a place for the king's personal devotions, directly accessible through a gallery from the royal apartments.[139]

The interior decoration, especially the stained glass, emphasised the theme of sacral kingship. The magnificent stained-glass windows contain a sequence of biblical scenes, portraying Louis IX as the successor to Old Testament kings, in their original form seemingly culminating in a narrative history of the kings of France leading up to the arrival of the relics in Paris.[140] The heraldic symbols – the royal *fleur de lys* and the castle of Castille – are further testimony to the building's royal identity (although Queen Margaret's Provençal arms were not included). Cohen characterises the Sainte-Chapelle as 'an architectural assertion of royal power and prerogative, projecting Louis's God-given right to rule on a monumental, public scale'.[141]

Its elaborate liturgical round was provided by chaplains, following the rites and music of Notre-Dame-de-Paris, for whom college buildings were built nearby. Regulated by royal charters in 1246 and 1248, the foundation was very generously endowed with land, rights and many precious objects. In 1248, too, the papal legate Odo of Tusculum dedicated the completed chapel with great ceremony, just prior to Louis's departure on crusade.

When Henry III visited Paris in 1254 he was much impressed with the chapel: contemporary rhymesters suggested that he would have liked to take it home with him. Widely imitated throughout western Europe, the architectural styles of northern France were an important influence on the design of Westminster Abbey as rebuilt by the English king from the mid-1240s and the centre of his cult of Edward the Confessor. But this was more a screen for political weakness than a manifestation of strength. Matthew Paris, the Saint Albans chronicler, who was no great admirer of kings, recognised the contrast. He called Louis 'king of terrestrial kings, both because of his heavenly unction and because of his power and military eminence'.[142] It was the chrism that gave the French kings their special power, he thought; evidently, they were regarded as pre-eminent in western Europe.

After Louis's return from crusade in 1254 his tastes overall were far plainer and his lifestyle highly ascetic. He railed against the magnificence and worldliness of court life, and his churches for the poor and sick, the mendicant orders and *béguines*, were built in an unadorned style. But his devotion to relics was unabated, and he remained alive to the power of magnificent royal imagery and public sacral rituals, which he combined with ostentatious penitential purification. In the later years of his reign, he attended and participated in up to a dozen showy translation or commemorative ceremonies, where he would prostrate himself before the relics as an act of ritual humiliation, accepting in person a small portion of the relic for himself.[143]

In the 1260s, moreover, he founded another major royal chapel, Saint-Maurice-de-Senlis, most of which would be destroyed at the French Revolution, and is

often overlooked today. Although probably built on one level rather than double height, it was said by contemporaries to have been comparable to the Sainte-Chapelle in the splendour of its decoration. This prestigious royal foundation for a college of Austin canons was constructed at his palace at Senlis, a favoured royal residence, between 1261 and 1264. It would house the recently acquired relics of the Roman martyr Saint Maurice and 23 of his companions from the Holy Theban Legion, and would intercede for the king and his family. A great public procession, orchestrated by the king himself, marked the passage of the relics into the city in 1262. Positioning himself at the heart of this magnificent and penitential ceremony, Louis, alongside Theobald of Champagne, king of Navarre, helped to bear on his own shoulders one of the huge chests on which the relics were displayed. The foundation became the centre of an important cult, as the king had intended, and in the later Middle Ages would acquire further important relics, including the arm-bone of St Maurice himself.[144]

Louis's model for magnificent penitential processions and for building relic-chapels set a pattern that was to be followed by his successors. Another lost church, Saint-Louis at Poissy, built by Philip IV and dedicated to Louis IX, his canonised grandfather, was a fine example and was intended as an equally impressive and prestigious memorial, this time to the saint-king himself (p. 390).

Monarchy, kingdom and royal justice

Louis followed the precepts of his grandfather, Philip Augustus, to govern firmly and fairly, and not to seize lands and rights from others unjustly.[145] During his reign, the lands conquered by the French crown, Normandy and part of the Languedoc, were brought far more firmly under royal control. To these gains were added the county of Mâcon, purchased in 1239 for £10,000 *tournois* from its childless count. The king was now the most substantial landholder and the wealthiest person in his kingdom (Map 5.3).

In Philip Augustus's first register dating from the first decade of the thirteenth century the term 'in domain' was still applied to the castles, lands, towns and rights held directly by the king, as had been the case throughout the early Capetian period. During Louis IX's reign, however, royal administration and royal justice penetrated deeply into the principalities held directly by the king, and gradually into the others. In the wake of this, and of the closer assimilation of Normandy and Languedoc to the French kingdom, the term royal domain began to take on a wider territorial sense. By around 1300 the expression had come to mean the royal lands, a territorial unit.

The royal administration developed and expanded to both drive and cope with the changes. At the same time the greatest barons, the peers of the realm, came to have less real power and an increasingly ceremonial role in government, but their independence from the crown was gradually eroded. The idea of the sovereignty of the king in France was growing rapidly in the wake of the realisation of his powers as suzerain. The king's power was extended first to all the vassals of

his vassals and then beyond to burgesses and peasants.[146] It spread gradually in all kinds of spheres – political, religious, financial, military.

The king replaced the church as the guardian of the peace for the whole realm and from 1258 attempted to outlaw private wars. And, as Philip of Beaumanoir showed, he exercised a special guardianship over all the churches in the kingdom, over and above baronial advocacy, which enabled him to draw them under his own influence. He legislated in some cases for the kingdom, not just the domain, he extended royal coinage throughout the realm, he levied military service from the principalities. All these powers stemmed from ancient royal prerogatives or from feudal suzerainty, but Louis IX was able to extend them as his real authority increased, so that in many spheres the French king was no longer ruling in his kingdom only through baronial consent. For the first time in the Capetian period the king's power was felt throughout the realm.

These changes were paralleled and reflected in changing ideas about the French kingdom. The expression *Francia*, when used in the context of France and not in its more general senses, came increasingly to describe the whole kingdom and was less often applied to the royal principality alone. The idea of the 'French people' was similarly widened as the notion that the kingdom of France consisted of the lands under the king's protection, tutelage and suzerainty gave way to a territorial conception of the French realm. For as knowledge of Roman law spread through northern France, the idea of the *communis patria*, the community of the fatherland, was adopted to fit the French kingdom, with the king as its embodiment. Thus in 1270 James of Revigny, a jurist of Orléans, wrote that: 'Just as Rome is the common fatherland of the Romans, the crown of the kingdom is the common fatherland of the kingdom because it is the head'.[147] References to the common good and public necessity also increase, reflecting the idea of a community of the realm, and with them goes the concept of a *naturalis*, a citizen of the kingdom as opposed to a foreigner or alien.

The writing of history in Old French enabled the power and deeds of the Capetian dynasty to reach new audiences, enabling a favourable projection of the dynasty and its power across the land. The most striking appropriation of vernacular history for monarchical promotion may be seen in the *Grandes Chroniques*. For example in 1274 Primat, when translating Suger's *Life of Louis VI* for this grand endeavour, added to the description of the 1124 campaign against the emperor that Theobald of Champagne and Henry I of England and Normandy supported Louis, with whom they were at war, 'for the needs of the kingdom against foreign nations', and equated the royal and imperial roles.[148] Yet the wider context for this royal propaganda was a burgeoning of secular texts in Old French, bringing together history, romance and epic and stimulating innovative manuscript illumination, which happened right across western Europe, from Ireland to Italy, far beyond the lands of the king of France.[149]

In the later Capetian period the king would be seen to make laws not only for his domain but also for the whole kingdom, reflecting changes in the climate of opinion about the nature and legislative powers of the royal office. For the

revival of Roman law, coupled with the growth of real royal power, brought with them an extension of royal rights. Thus, Thomas Aquinas wrote that the power to make law belongs to the person who represents the multitude; and in the *Livre des Hommages* of 1256 John of Blanot equated the king of France with the Roman *princeps*, exercising powers founded in Roman law within his lands. Emphasising that the king was pre-eminent in the whole kingdom, he coined a famous legal tag: *rex in regno suo princeps est* – in his kingdom the king is the prince.[150]

Each of the different regions of northern France had retained its own customs, and the influence of Roman law and the developments in legal processes resulted in the codification of many of these, including the customs of Normandy, Beauvaisis, Anjou and Champagne. The so-called *Établissements de Saint Louis*, a compilation of statutes made before 1273 and widely and mistakenly attributed to the king, are based largely on the customs of Anjou. The work is an attempt to use Roman law for commentaries upon French law, and as such was highly influential. It gave expression to the king's sovereign rights over Jews, coinage and serfs across the kingdom.[151]

The most successful legal treatise of this period is the *Coutûmes de Beauvaisis* (the Customs of the Beauvaisis) by Philip of Beaumanoir, a royal *bailli*; written before 1283, it is a valuable analysis of contemporary legal practice.[152] The canon law precept 'what pleases the prince has the force of law' was well known to its author. He declared that just as each baron was sovereign in his barony so the king was sovereign in his kingdom and could make whatever laws he pleased. In times of peace he had the right to legislate for his kingdom, provided that the ordinances were made with reasonable cause, for the common good, and with the counsel of the great men, and that they did not contravene good customs or the Christian religion.

In practice, the French king could with such provisos make new laws. His ordinances were not automatically binding on the nobility, but were created with baronial support and consent that made them applicable in some cases beyond the royal lands. Nevertheless, baronial co-operation in enforcing them was expected. In 1230 an ordinance states that any barons refusing to accept its terms will be constrained to do so by the king himself and by other barons acting on his behalf.[153]

A reforming ordinance issued by Louis in 1254 is a striking illustration of the extension of matters that should be dealt with by the king.[154] In its earliest form it was intended to bring about the improvement of the royal administration. The royal officials were given a series of oaths to swear, promising good conduct, and were forbidden to behave in dishonest ways. Lesser agents could appeal against *baillis* if their conduct was wanting in this respect.

The king reserved the right to amend and alter the ordinance and this he did, it seems, almost immediately, adding instructions on public morality and against usury, blasphemy and prostitution, games of chance and the frequenting of inns meant for travellers. This greatly widened its effects: rather than relating merely to the conduct of royal officials it now applied to society in general. Further similar additions were later made, one again forbidding usury, another regulating the requisition of horses for royal business.

The ordinance reached this state by the end of 1254 and after some rearrangement of its clauses was promulgated in the royal lands both in the north and in the Languedoc. It was much admired by contemporaries, and many copies of its text survive, including one by Joinville, who comments that it greatly benefited the kingdom as a whole. In its attempts to improve the quality of administration it was paralleled in Louis's system of *enquêteurs*; in its general moral precepts, it was reflected in royal ordinances against blasphemy and usury.

The texts of many royal ordinances have survived; others have been lost and their existence may only be deduced from writs to *baillis* enacting their provisions in practice. Clearly not all new legislation was promulgated as a solemn *établissement* applicable to the whole kingdom. These were rare under Louis IX although more frequently enacted by his successors. Most ordinances were intended for all or part of the royal lands, and many were issued as instructions to local officials. For example, in 1257–61 an order was issued in the royal domain to outlaw trial by battle. Linked with an attempt to prevent private wars, this was greatly disliked by the nobility and not fully accepted by the jurists. By forbidding trial by battle the king was drawing many cases into the royal court. It does not seem that this was the main aim of the exercise, which was again part of Louis's moral legislation, but it did extend the scope of royal justice.

This process was in any case well under way by the middle of the reign. All matters that directly touched the king were supposed to come before his court. These 'royal cases' included crimes of *lèse-majesté*, and certain disputes about royal land and rights, false money and forged royal *acta*, the illegal carrying of arms, and the breaking of safeguards. There is little evidence for a concerted drive to extend these cases against independent jurisdictions on the part of the king's officials in Louis's reign at least, although sometimes they pre-empted the work of other courts. Yet Louis was clear that all law derived from himself as king, as when in a 1254 ordinance he granted permission to the seneschal of Beaucaire to use Roman law in the southern provinces, rather than accepting that the crown was bound by the obligation to use it. His successors, too, were adamant that the king had the power to recognise the law.[155]

Appeals to the king also increased in number during Louis's reign, and especially in his later years. In his ordinance of 1190 for the administration of the realm Philip Augustus had laid down that judicial sessions of the royal court should be held three times a year for appeals – *clamores* (Latin) or *requêtes* (French) – from the kingdom. These were cases passed on from the *baillis*' assize courts or brought straight before the king. No regular minutes of the court of appeal appeared until the series known as the *Olim* began in 1254, and then the cases were not numerous. In the later part of Louis's reign, the volume of appeals grew: many were heard by the *baillis* and *prévôts* and some went on to the royal court, eliciting considerable resentment among the landholders in the royal lands whose jurisdiction was being bypassed.

The king's determination to make the nobles subject to the laws of the land was equally disliked, as is well illustrated in the trial of Enguerran of Coucy. In about

1259 this lord hanged three noble Flemish boys who had trespassed on his lands and infringed his hunting rights. They were in the care of the abbot of neighbouring Saint-Nicholas-des-Bois, who complained to the king. Louis ordered Enguerran to appear at his court and when he refused, claiming the right to trial by his peers, the king threw him into prison. When he appeared before the royal court he was supported by most of the French barons, but the king forbade him the right of trial by battle, convicted him, and punished him harshly. Likewise, when a knight who had lost a case in Charles of Anjou's court appealed to the king and Charles had him incarcerated, Louis insisted that the case should come before the royal court, and gave the knight help with legal representation; in the end Charles lost the case.[156] These cases illustrate the king's strong commitment to his role as a lawgiver, ensuring that justice was extended to the disadvantaged in society, where necessary against the interests of the wealthy and powerful.

The royal court of justice, the *parlement*, gradually emerged from the royal court (*curia regis*), reaching its maturity in the first half of the fourteenth century (p. 395). In the first part of Louis IX's reign the royal court and its committees remained fluid and flexible in their business and operation and the word *parlement* had no one precise meaning. By 1254 the judicial sessions of the king's inner council ceased to be itinerant and were fixed in Paris. Committees of the council, composed mainly of royal knights and clerks, and described as the *parlement*, sat and made judgements on behalf of the whole *curia regis*, with their decisions recorded.

Furthermore, meetings of the whole *curia regis*, sometimes very large and ceremonial in character, were often described as *parlements*. Some resembled their emerging English counterpart, the Parliament, quite closely. For example, ordinances on the coinage were issued by a full *parlement* in 1265 and in 1259 Enguerran of Coucy was tried before a substantial assembly. In 1258 the Norman bishops petitioned about encroachments on their dignity and their jurisdiction at the *parlement*.

Yet full assemblies became increasingly rare, meeting only to ratify treaties, declarations of war, crusades and major administrative decisions, and specialised committees of the royal council sat with a greater frequency to audit the accounts of the *baillis* and to hear royal cases. Often days were set aside for assemblies of representatives from one particular region of France to meet in Paris and consider local issues. Burgesses not only from Paris but from the regions also became involved. From 1259 to 1260 representatives of the towns were required to appear each November for a financial audit, and they also sent representatives at other times. They participated in the issue of an ordinance on coinage in 1262. From these differing manifestations of the *curia regis* in Louis IX's reign would emerge in the later Capetian period the states general, the *chambre des comptes* (financial bureau) and the *parlement* (the royal court of justice) (pp. 395–396).

The royal household, administration and finances

Although the poet or poets known as Rutebeuf graphically criticised the malign influence of the king's counsellors – the fox, the wolf, the hound and the ass – in

imposing their will upon him, William of Saint-Pathus tells us that Louis surrounded himself with good, honest and just men, eschewing the company of all sinners and wrongdoers.[157] Whilst the king seems to have chosen and controlled his counsellors himself, it is clear that they were handpicked for their commitment to his moral vision as well as for their capabilities.[158]

At the centre of Louis's court was his own family, his mother Blanche of Castile, his wife Margaret of Provence and his brothers Robert of Artois, Alfonso of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou, supported by a group of familiar retainers, his *mesnie*, numbering some 50–60 people. In the royal entourage, too, were the king's counsellors, a group which in 1239 was composed of some 20 clerics and 30 nobles and knights.

Blanche of Castile had relied on the advice of leading ecclesiastics who had served her husband and her father, such as the great organiser Walter Cornut, archbishop of Sens and leading scholar William of Auvergne, bishop of Paris. Louis turned to their successors, such as Renaud of Corbeil, bishop of Paris, Adam, bishop of Senlis, and Odo Clément and Matthew of Vendôme, abbots of Saint-Denis, as well as to his chaplains such as Master Robert of Sorbon, and his confessors and almoners. The Franciscan friar Odo Rigaud, who became archbishop of Rouen in 1248, was his closest personal companion in the 1250s.[159]

The extent to which the great barons of the realm advised the king outside the formal meetings of the court is not clear. The holders of the great royal offices of state – the constable, marshal, butler, chamberlain – who were in regular attendance on Louis, were drawn mainly from the next rank of the baronage. Examples are the marshal Walter of Nemours; John of Beaumont, chamberlain until 1252, who commanded the royal armies, and his successor Alfonso of Brienne, count of Eu; and Alfonso's brother John of Acre who was butler from 1258. Many of Louis's principal and seemingly most influential lay counsellors such as Peter of Villebéon, the king's trusted chamberlain and secretary, Simon of Clermont, a judicial expert, and to a lesser degree Joinville himself, were drawn from the ranks of the lesser nobles and knights.[160]

Much of the royal administration was exercised through its officials in the localities. In all the royal lands *baillis* (or seneschals in the south) were set over groups of *prévôts* and exercised both judicial and financial functions. Appeals from the *prévôts*' courts came to them in the first instance and from 1234 they were responsible for the profits of justice and other payments such as commutations of the *gîte* (lodging right), subsidies from communes, tolls on trade, fees for the use of the royal seal and payments raised from the royal forests. The *prévôts* brought their accounts to the *baillis*, who presented them at the Temple in Paris for audit.[161] They were responsible also for out-payments, which from the 1238 accounts onwards were divided under three broad heads: gifts, alms and pensions; the king's works; wages of officials such as castellans and judges.

The *baillis*, normally laymen, often of bourgeois or lesser knightly rather than noble families, had a significant military role: they oversaw the castles in their *bailliages* and levied troops for the royal armies. In his celebrated codification of the

customs of the Beauvaisis, Philip of Beaumanoir sets out the ideal characteristics of a *bailli*: he should be wise, God-fearing, gentle, brave, generous, obedient to his lord, shrewd, and he should uphold the law.[162] Such advice was not always followed and was difficult to enforce.

Following strong complaints about the conduct of his officials, Louis IX sent round *enquêteurs* from 1247 onwards, travelling agents of the king, usually friars, who would collect complaints about them and remedy these where possible. Their records suggest that whilst the *baillis* and *prévôts* generally followed acceptable lines of conduct, many of the lesser officials were corrupt.[163] In his ordinance of 1254 the king attempted to tackle these ills. Although his moral legislation had some impact there were always difficulties in a system where many offices were farmed out; and since at a local level royal rights were viewed by those to whom they were delegated in terms of profit, they were constantly extended.

Nevertheless, the power of the *baillis* should not be overstated. In almost every *bailliage* there were independent nobles with administrative and judicial rights of their own, whose men could only be dealt with by royal officials through them. Although their rights were in many cases eaten away by agents of the king, they remained a stumbling block to the full extension of royal power. This was also the case in the apanages of Charles of Anjou and Alfonso of Poitiers, where these princes had their own administrations not unlike that of the king.

Central to the royal administration was the royal chancery, the king's writing office. Supervised by the guardian of the seal, a royal clerk, this continued to produce royal *acta* which were gradually evolving into differentiated series. Diplomas, the most formal instruments, were becoming rare in Louis's reign. Letters patent, a more streamlined and flexible form of act lacking the royal monogram and the signs of the royal officials found on the diploma, were the normal instrument of government. These fell into three types, ranging from the informal to the formal: *mandements* or writs for instructions to royal officials; an intermediate group of semi-formal writs; and on occasions letters close for political and confidential correspondence.

The guardian of the seal also superintended the royal archives, in the later part of the reign kept in the treasury building next to the Sainte-Chapelle. Royal registers were drawn up but these were not systematic, as they were probably intended to safeguard royal rights rather than to record all the royal *acta*. It is possible that the arrival of the administrative correspondence of Alfonso of Poitiers, which was highly organised, at the archives in 1271 stimulated the royal chancery to register more royal acts thereafter, although there was no comprehensive system for this until 1304. Here the Capetian chancery lagged far behind that of the English kings, which had been enrolling the bulk of their *acta* since at least 1199.

In the French royal archives, loose documents were kept in chests or *layettes*; they covered a great variety of matters such as treaties and diplomatic affairs, correspondence with the king, requests and petitions. They were subdivided into 18 categories after 1220, including fiefs, towns, castles, dukes, counts, soldiers, alms, and then into 40 groups from 1264. After 1269 the whole collection was sorted

into two main parts: documents relating to Normandy and the royal domain in the north, and documents concerning the Languedoc.

Royal accounts surviving from Louis's reign itemise both central and local sources of income and expenditure. Their interpretation is challenging: a major fire at the *chambre des comptes* in 1737 and the French Revolution destroyed the great bulk of the medieval financial records of the French crown. Those which survive are only a small part of a rich and copious archive, and the losses of Louis IX's records are greater than those of his successors.

Yet some idea of how royal finances were managed, and of receipts and expenditure, may be gleaned from the most substantial surviving accounts, which cover parts of 1227, 1238 and 1248. All these can be compared with similar more substantial financial records surviving from the reigns of Philip Augustus (pp. 224–226) and Philip III (p. 398), in terms both of content and format. There were two principal currencies in use by the French crown: *livres* (pounds) *parisis* and *livres tournois*. Up to 1204 three *livres parisis* were equivalent to four *livres tournois*; from 1205 the ratio shifted to four *livres parisis* to five *livres tournois*.[164]

Sivéry discerns incremental improvements in the accounting techniques of the royal administration between 1202–3 and 1248. Although the Templars were still acting as the royal bankers, increasingly they were supervised by royal officials. The influence of Italian financial practices on the royal court is reflected in more sophisticated financial management techniques, and the rigorous approach of the 1248 accounts can be linked also with Louis's administrative reforms prior to his departure on crusade.

These accounts are not comprehensive statements of annual receipts and expenditure. The total receipts from the profits of justice, the domain, forests and feudal dues handled by the *baillis* and *prévôts* – £54,000 *parisis* for Candlemas 1227 and £101,000 for Ascension 1238 – each represent the totals for one term only out of the three. An extrapolation from them suggests that the overall totals for 1238 and 1248 would have been approximately £235,286 and £178,531 respectively. Louis IX's fixed annual revenue from this source was therefore probably around £200,000 *parisis* by 1248.[165] This is on a par with estimates for Philip Augustus's annual ordinary income of some £200,000 *parisis* in 1221.[166]

Sivéry suggests that an increased proportion of this income derived from the towns, funding which after 1252 would be managed directly by the king's own commissioners. He posits also that the king's receipts from the royal domain were by this time levelling out and even beginning to fall away, Louis's principled reforms having curbed the rapaciousness of the local officials.[167] But ordinary income from other sources continued to rise dramatically, for example from taxes on trade and payments for alienating church lands. Some of the growth in royal receipts came also from a significant expansion in royal justice during Louis's reign. This was a profitable operation, a consideration that clearly weighed with officials in the localities. But it also reflected changes in the climate of opinion about the nature and legislative powers of the royal office.

Clearly in normal circumstances the king could balance his budget. Extraordinary expenditure called for extraordinary taxation, however, and the king's success in

raising additional funds is shown by the estimated tripling of the crown's regional and exceptional revenues between 1202–3 and 1286–7, although over this period as a whole the rate of inflation was probably between 10% and 15%. By 1286–7 the royal budget had reached some £706,000 *parisis* and with extraordinary sources also, as much as £1,400,000.[168]

Royal expenditure was from 1238 organised under three broad headings: fiefs and alms, including land purchases; public works encompassing the construction and maintenance of buildings, roads and other infrastructure; and salaries of royal officials.[169] Louis's first crusade put this system under substantial strain: the first two years alone cost more than £1 million *parisis*. Extraordinary income on a massive scale was required: most was extracted from the French church – which was in aggregate considerably wealthier than the king – with papal permission. Similar crusading subsidies would be raised to finance Charles of Anjou's wars in Sicily and Louis's last crusade.

The towns were required to contribute substantial sums to fund the crusade, even when they had charters of exemption; this became a source of considerable resentment. Lesser sums were raised from the taxation of Jewish and Lombard moneylenders, which seems to have been moral rather than financial in motivation; despite this the king borrowed large sums from the Lombards in 1248–54. The Templars' banking system coped very effectively in transferring the substantial sums to the king in Palestine, being disrupted only by disorder in the kingdom following the death of Blanche of Castile.[170]

A significant part of royal expenditure flowed through the king's household. This was run, as earlier, by royal officials to meet the day-to-day needs of the king. Its principal department was the chamber which was almost constantly on the move, managing the logistics of the king's court and its accounts. However, its journeys were seemingly made almost entirely within the king's own domain: he left his lands only for special purposes such as waging war or visiting holy shrines. In 1256, for example, although based mainly in Paris and his many palaces and abbeys in its vicinity – Pontoise, Vincennes, Poissy, Royaumont, Maubuisson – he made a short visit to Roye and Péronne in Picardy. More extensive was his pilgrimage to celebrate Easter at the abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel in his Norman lands, king and household staying *en route* with ecclesiastics such as his adviser Odo Rigaud, archbishop of Rouen.[171]

Some fragmentary but detailed schedules of household receipts and expenditure may be found in extant royal accounts for the first part of the reign, under the heading *itinera* or journeys, reflecting its travelling nature. For example, in the 119-day period from Candlemas to Ascension in 1234, under Blanche of Castile's rule, its total receipts were some £25,000 *parisis*. The money was spent on the household departments; on gifts and wages and equipment, including substantial payments in alms; on robes, horses, troops; and on Queen Margaret's coronation at Sens.

An important survival from later in the reign, both as an object and for the information it contains, is an original although incomplete household account on wax tablets covering the longer period February 1256 to February 1257

(Source 5.4). Drawn up by one of the royal chamberlains, John Sarrazin, it gives invaluable evidence about the household, its organisation and personnel. Almost £125,000 flowed through its coffers in 21 months during 1256 and 1257, its receipts and expenditure precisely balancing. The king's priorities and his day-to-day activities are brought into vivid relief.

SOURCE 5.4 WAX TABLETS OF JOHN SARRAZIN WITH ROYAL HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNTS, 1256–7

Most surviving original records from the Middle Ages are written on parchment (sheepskin) with authenticating seals made of wax. In parallel, right across western Europe, both formal and informal records of lay people and ecclesiastics were made on tablets of wax, mounted on wood, a tradition going back to antiquity. As wax is considerably less robust than parchment, far fewer of these survive. Yet the regulations laid down for their manufacture in the *livre des métiers* of Stephen Boileau, *prévôt* of Paris (1268), demonstrate that there was a flourishing market for them in Louis IX's reign.

The French royal household kept its accounts on wax tablets. From the later Capetian period at least five survive. The earliest still extant, albeit incomplete, is known from internal evidence to cover the period February 1256 to February 1257. It is in the form of a book, 475 x 205 mm in dimension, containing 26 black wax resin tablets. The mounts, 14 in number, are of beech wood, and were originally bound together in a parchment cover. The text is in Latin, its script typical of the royal chancery of the time. Drawn up by one of the royal chamberlains, John Sarrazin, and today a treasure of the Archives Nationales in Paris, this rare survivor gives invaluable evidence about the household, its organisation and personnel, as well as an insight into often-overlooked record-keeping practices of the Middle Ages.[172]

IMAGE 5.9 Wax tablet of John Sarrazin with royal household accounts, 1256–7

Archives Nationales, AE/II/258, no. 24 face

The accounts are organised by the household departments, which in 1261 would be regulated by a royal ordinance, setting them on a more formal footing. The chamber was the leading department, supported by other teams: the stables; victualling department; buttery; kitchen; and fruitery – including the provision of spices and candles. Each department had its own officials appointed by the king and responsible to the two masters of the household, and the queen and princes also each had their own establishments. Royal chaplains, almoners, confessors, knights and sergeants all appear in the accounts, often by name.

The royal household was thus a very significant body, which handled substantial sums of money. Its average daily spend of around £200 on its day-to-day activities in 1256 and 1257 is roughly comparable with that in the 1230s. However exceptional expenditure also appears on its books. Queen Margaret's coronation in 1234 cost some £2,500, and an instalment for the purchase of the relics from Baldwin of Constantinople in 1238, about £8,000. At the end of the reign, the household oversaw the logistics for the knighting of Philip (III) in 1267, funded by a feudal aid, the outlay amounting to almost £14,000.[173]

The later years of Louis's reign saw a stabilisation and centralisation in the monetary system of France that was greatly to benefit trade, and which in the later Middle Ages was considered one of the greatest achievements of his reign. The striking of coinage was a royal and baronial prerogative and brought with it the power to fix the value and exchange rate of money (Image 5.10). The scope for making profits was considerable and complaints about the debasement and counterfeiting of coinage were frequent. Such problems were exacerbated by a period of economic instability from about 1260, with marked fluctuations in the prices of key commodities: the impact of this was clearly of concern to the king.

In 1263, the king introduced a standardised gold and silver coinage (the *écu d'or* and the *gros tournois*), fixed in value: this both reflected his already-increased powers vis-à-vis the barons, and further enhanced them. He ordered that the royal coinage should circulate throughout the kingdom, at the same time banning the circulation

IMAGE 5.10 Engraving of a gold écu of Louis IX, 1263

From A. Engel and R. Serrure, *Traité de numismatique du moyen age*, iii (Paris, 1903), 948

of English pounds sterling. In an ordinance given with the assent of the burgesses of Paris, Orléans, Laon and other towns, he decreed that his coinage alone was to be valid in the royal lands but that outside them it was to be accepted alongside seigneurial money, which had to differ in appearance from it and must not use the images of the barons. It was forbidden to melt down or to counterfeit royal money. These provisions evidently caused some difficulties, since in 1265 the king modified them and allowed some outside coinages to circulate in the royal lands. Nevertheless, they marked the beginning of a move towards a centralised monetary system, and the triumph of the royal pounds *parisis* and *tournois* over baronial money.[174]

During Louis's reign the king's feudal and suzerain powers were greatly extended. Royal government and administration became fully developed in the royal lands and became more widely applicable outside them. The enhancement of traditional royal powers, both ecclesiastical and feudal, began to modify the nature of royal authority to transform the king from suzerain into sovereign. The effects of such changes did not emerge fully until the later Capetian period. But the developments in the years 1226 to 1270 made them possible.

Warfare, chivalry and royal defence

Louis's holy kingship was underpinned by the power of the sword.[175] Although from the 1240s the king and his barons increasingly adopted the view of the church that the highest form of chivalry was crusading, and turned their might mainly against the infidel, this was still a military monarchy, albeit one led by a crusader saint. The impact of this change in enhancing the military powers of the crown would be profound.

Exposed to combat from a young age, the king was well-trained in the arts of war and developed into a brave if at times impulsive and rash warrior. He led his army at the battle of Taillebourg in 1242, defeating Henry III of England in a pitched battle. To his troops, he was clearly an inspiring leader with great charisma. 'I never saw a man so finely armed', writes Joinville admiringly of the king when in 1250 he appeared in the thick of the fray at the battle of Mansourah. 'He could be seen from the shoulders up, set above the rest of his men, with a gilded helmet on his head and a German sword in his hand.'[176]

Joinville's account of Louis's first crusade is a celebration of thirteenth-century knighthood and its attributes of generosity, personal bravery, duty to one's family, respect for authority and sense of community.[177] These were the values of a *prud'homme*, a man whose valour was tempered with wisdom and piety. Their strongest exponent was, Joinville tells us, Louis himself. Throughout his reign the king endeavoured to embody *prud'homme* virtues, seeking through strict self-control to curb his tendencies to impulsiveness and irritability.[178] After his return from crusade his aspirations were for peace and good governance within his realm, which were just as much a reflection of *prud'homme* values as armed combat.

Louis's brothers were amongst his most-valued military companions, and the knighting of each was marked with lavish and costly ceremonials. So too would be the dubbing of his son and heir, Philip, in 1267, the celebrations not least aimed to drum up support for the king's scheme for his second crusade.[179] The most able of Louis's brothers as a warrior was Charles of Anjou. He cultivated a reputation for charm and valour, displaying also mannered courtesy towards women – although contemporaries noted that he did not display one important virtue, generosity. Moreover, his summary execution of Conradin, the legitimate Hohenstaufen heir, significantly sullied his reputation to the extent that generations of subsequent Saint-Denis chroniclers sought to shift the blame for this disinheritance to others.[180] Charles's enthusiasm for staging tournaments was so great that Louis came to believe he disturbed the peace of the kingdom, and on those grounds welcomed his departure for Sicily in 1265.[181]

Blanche of Castile, their mother, was clearly a very able military leader. The first part of the reign saw her waging several major and effective campaigns to impose her authority over the great barons of the realm. Emblematic of her success was the fortification of the castle and town of Angers, recovered from Peter Mauclerc of Brittany between 1230 and 1234. The vast size of these defences and the speed of their construction recalled Richard I's creation of Château Gaillard, and was matched by the huge expenditure required to create them. With its great striped walls built to withstand the latest siege engines, Angers was however an early example of the new breed of fortifications which relied on strong gatehouses as the core of their defences, rather than central towers or *donjons*.[182]

Louis and his administrators would jealously guard his rights to royal castles, recording them in his registers and pursuing appeals from their holders for the crown to uphold their rights.[183] In his southern lands he acquired and refortified strategic towns and castles to secure his lands and their borders. For example, after 1240 Carcassonne was given strong new ramparts. Peyrepertuse, spectacularly sited on a crag in the heart of the land of the heretics, was purchased from the kingdom of Aragon in 1239 and in 1250–1 was reconstructed at the cost of some £200.[184] And in Palestine, the king oversaw and funded the enormously costly refortification of several major crusader cities: at Caesarea, his massive walls still survive.[185]

Louis also created a strongly fortified Mediterranean port, Aigues-Mortes (Source 5.3), which although given important privileges never became a leading commercial centre, remaining instead as the main embarkation point for pilgrims and crusaders bound for the Holy Land. Rather than establishing his own navy the king hired ships from Venice and Genoa to transport his armies on crusade, a practical response to a vast logistical challenge.

The formal obligations of the barons to perform feudal military service to the crown were never denied, but during the early part of the reign it proved increasingly difficult to raise this service in practice. Many lords would not levy it from their own men but would turn up in person with the smallest contingents possible. Then they would disappear as soon as their 40 days' service was up, often in the middle of a campaign, as happened in 1230 (p. 258). Increasingly, however, they

were permitted to commute their military obligations for money payments, and the royal right to military service, strongly upheld and extended, was to become an important source of revenue. Within the kingdom, the crown therefore depended increasingly on mercenary troops to supplement feudal levies and urban militias: in 1233, for example, 19 communes sent armies to help put down the rising at Beauvais (p. 299).

Louis's crusade of 1248–54 marked a dramatic shift in the scale of royal warfare. Some 15,000 troops served under the king's command, including more than 2,500 knights. While many of the barons mainly paid their own way, particularly at first, very substantial sums – the first two years alone cost around £1 million – were required from the royal coffers to support them, and to sustain the war effort over almost a decade. Joinville himself, having lost his treasure and possessions during the retreat from Mansourah, was funded by the king for the rest of his time in Outremer. But the crusade was also a greatly unifying force for Louis's people: after his return, baronial wars ceased, and his kingdom was to enjoy a period of peace and economic prosperity.[186]

In the 1260s the great men of the realm and their followers were once more called upon to provide troops and finances for Louis's second crusade. Joinville, fearing for the fate of his lands, refused to go, but overall the size of the army probably almost matched the force deployed in 1248. For example, the Venetians put forward a bid to supply ships to transport 10,000 men and 4,000 horses.

Valuable evidence survives about 38 of those military leaders who signed up to serve the king (or perhaps Philip III shortly afterwards). This document provides lists of names, the sizes of their contingents, and their terms of engagement, including the sums of money which the king paid each to secure his service for the royal army. For example, Érard of Vallery was contracted to provide 30 knights for a year with their own support troops and horses in return for a payment of £8,000 *tournois*, excluding provisions. This sum would have secured some 140 fighting men.

The great princes recruited their own contingents in similar fashion. In 1267, for example, Alfonso of Poitiers contracted not only the sum of £3,000 to William of Chauvigny, to be paid in stages, but also lands and feudal rights, perhaps to overcome some reluctance on William's part to go on crusade. Certainly, the ranks of the crusading army of 1270 had to be reinforced with mercenary knights and footsoldiers, some recruited from Catalonia, Provence and Genoa, and by a contingent led by Prince Edward of England funded by a loan of £70,000 from the king. And the losses would be very great: 340 of the leading men alone, including the king himself, would end their lives in the course of the campaign.[187]

In the early years of his reign, Blanche of Castile and Louis had struggled to hold the royal army together to combat insurrections within the realm. But Louis's crusades, a manifestation of warfare on a grand scale, transformed the military authority and powers of the Capetian monarchy. Great fighting forces brought together under the sign of the cross increasingly took on a new identity as a royal army, and the ultimate aspiration of the knight now became to serve the king himself.

Under Louis's successors, royal rights to military service would be increasingly enforced not just from the great men of the realm but from their vassals and knights right across the kingdom.[188]

The king and the princes

Under Louis IX and his successors, the idea and the reality of the French kingdom revived dramatically, but it was not powerful enough to break down the regional communities, the great fiefs within the realm. The French principalities outside the royal sphere retained their own identities, laws and customs. In general, the trend was towards a firmer ducal or comital power, a growing administration, the closer dependence of the nobility on their overlords, and this was the case as much in the other principalities as in the royal lands and the apanages. At the same time however, royal power was extended increasingly into the principalities.

The great princes were now far fewer in number than a century earlier as several key principalities which had come into royal hands were held by Louis's brothers through arrangements known from the early fourteenth century as apanages. By the terms of his will, made in June 1225, Louis VIII had followed the practices of many contemporary princes in using his acquisitions to enrich his younger sons whilst keeping his patrimony intact.[189] The king had decreed that all the land held by his father Philip Augustus should go to his successor, Louis IX, except that his second son, Robert, should have Artois and all the lands that Louis VIII had inherited from his mother. The third son would be endowed with Anjou and Maine, the fourth Poitou and Auvergne, and the rest were to take holy orders (Figure 5.1). Reversion was stipulated in the case of Louis's maternal inheritance, and also for the lands already held by Philip Hurepel, the king's half-brother, the count of Boulogne. But it was not in the Anjou and Poitou inheritances – lands that Philip Augustus and Louis VIII had conquered. In 1284 *parlement* was nevertheless retrospectively to impose reversion on Anjou and Poitou.

Louis IX allowed his brothers to take over their apanages as they came of age: Artois went to Robert, and would pass to his son on his death in 1250. Poitou and Auvergne were granted to Alfonso, and Anjou and Maine not to John, who had died, but to Louis VIII's seventh son Charles, in 1246. To these holdings, Alfonso added Toulouse by his marriage to its heiress, Joan, in 1237, while Charles gained Provence, outside the borders of France, through his union in 1246 with Beatrice. Louis gave only acquisitions to his own sons: Alençon and Perche to Peter, Valois to John Tristan, and Clermont-en-Beauvaisis to Robert. In the event, only the last founded a dynasty (the house of Bourbon) and the other lands would revert back to the crown according to the provisions made by the king (pp. 401–402). By the middle years of the reign, these arrangements gave the king a powerful group of supporters from his own close family.

The rulers of the other great principalities – Gascony (known also as Aquitaine), Burgundy, Flanders, Champagne and Brittany – were all likewise related to the

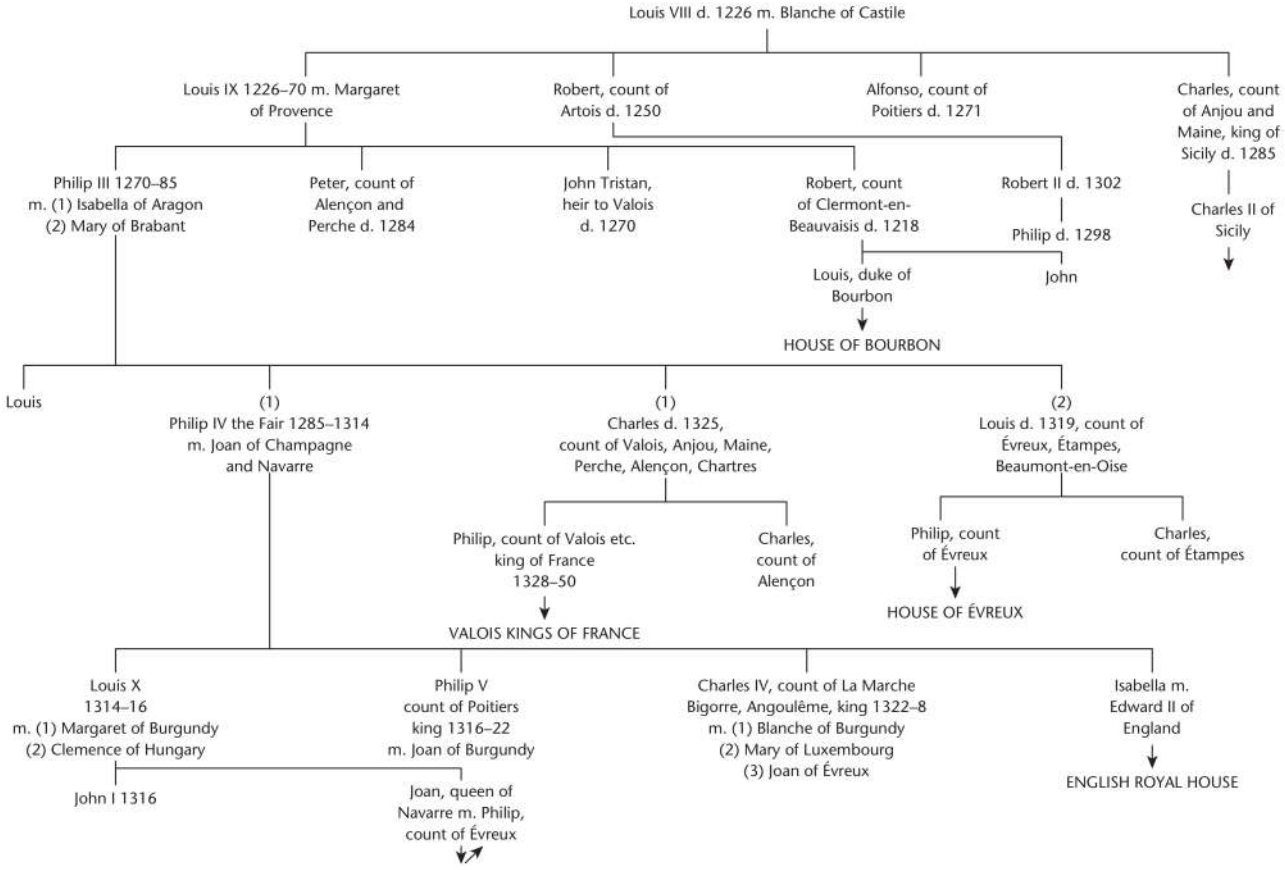


FIGURE 5.1 Outline genealogy of the Capetian kings, 1226–1328

Capetians and were expected to perform homage for their lands, to provide troops for the royal army and to attend the royal court for great royal occasions. Yet significant issues still remained between them and the crown about how far royal rights obtained in their lands and about the extent to which the king was able to oversee relationships between them, including their right to wage internecine war.[190]

During Louis's minority the term barons, encompassing the princes and the higher aristocracy more broadly, became a shorthand for the opposition to Blanche. Yet this group posed no threat to Louis himself as king. It had no common purpose and never developed into a movement, as happened in England. The interests of the princes were, as in previous centuries, maintaining their own landholdings, rights and privileges against each other and against the royal lands. As earlier, the princes ran their own administrations – in the cases of Flanders and Champagne very efficiently – and were accustomed to settling their own differences by private wars. Shifting and often dangerous coalitions threatened royal authority and lands, but through a mixture of diplomacy and aggression, Blanche was effective in maintaining the rights of the crown.

After about 1238 the direct threat to the crown from the barons began to diminish, although the pattern of changing alliances continued. Theobald count of Champagne inherited the kingdom of Navarre in 1234 and became highly preoccupied with these southern lands, uniting often with the king against the threat from Henry III on his borders. Hugh IV duke of Burgundy was pursuing expansion into the neighbouring county of Burgundy, which lay within the borders of the Holy Roman Empire. Theobald, Hugh and Peter Mauclerc of Brittany all went off on crusade to Outremer from 1239–40; later, in 1248, most of the leading barons accompanied the king on his own crusade, many at their own expense.

After the crusade, the king's role as lawgiver and moral mediator strengthened his political and legal powers incrementally against those of the other great leaders within the realm. Louis crushed private wars, outlawed judicial duels, arbitrated in disputes between his barons and increasingly attracted legal cases into the royal court. In 1263, he even forbade his barons to issue coins with their images on them as this undermined his authority. Although this significant rebalancing of powers within the French kingdom occasioned resentment and complaints – as in the case of Enguerran of Coucy in 1259 (pp. 313–314) – the princes now found royal power and authority increasingly hard to resist.

Royal power in Normandy

By 1226 Normandy had been thoroughly subjugated by Philip Augustus and Louis VIII, and many of its ties with England had been cut. It passed to the French crown with a strong identity and traditions and a well-established administration of its own. The king became its duke, and although he did not use the title, Normandy remained a duchy, separate from the older royal lands, although coming increasingly under the influence of the royal government in Paris. Yet right up to the sealing of the treaty of Paris in 1259, the English still claimed Normandy

and cross-channel links continued, albeit continually weakening. The Normans did not, it seems, settle down under the French king quite as peacefully as has sometimes been suggested.

Normandy was a wealthy province. At Michaelmas 1230 it brought in nearly £32,000 *parisis* and at Ascension 1238 nearly £39,000, over a third of the takings from all the royal *bailliages* put together. Rouen, the prosperous capital, was the second largest city in France. Its position on the river Seine placed it at a key strategic point on the trade routes for fish and salt between Normandy and Paris, as well as enabling it to control the continuing of more long-distance exports of French wine to England and imports including cheese and pork. The wealth of Normandy and the sophistication of its administration, as well as its strategic position and proximity to the royal lands, surely explain its retention by the French kings.

The tenurial links between Normandy and England, still quite strong at the start of Louis's reign, were gradually loosened as French rule in the duchy became increasingly accepted as a long-term political reality. After Henry III's failed campaign in 1230 the magnates on both sides of the channel began to sell or exchange their lands in order to consolidate their holdings in one jurisdiction or the other. But a number of Norman nobles were ready to sell their support to Henry III: in 1242 Robert Malet, living in Normandy, was given back his lands in England in return for his support for the English side.[191]

In 1244, according to Matthew Paris, Louis IX demanded that all landholders with cross-channel possessions should give up either their English or their French possessions, and seized the Norman lands of several English lords. Henry III retaliated by confiscating French-held lands in England,[192] although a few families survived with dual allegiance. The Estouteville family had lands on both sides of the channel into the fourteenth century, although they were a rare exception. So too did a handful of cathedral chapters up to 1336.

All this generated a feeling of mistrust between the French and English kings, whilst the Normans, as their complaints showed, resented the soldiers of Philip Augustus and the administrators of Louis IX who held high office in the duchy, and disliked the increasing influence of Paris in their affairs. But this hostility did not erupt into open revolt, as in the Languedoc, where tensions were far greater. As Louis's reign wore on local men, too, began occasionally to receive higher offices, as they had always held the lesser ones. Furthermore, Norman nobles, knights and citizens had continued to be heavily involved in making judgements in the courts, which perhaps to an extent limited the scope for corruption of the royal officials.

The administrative system in Normandy had been changed after the conquest of the duchy.[193] By 1224 the previously quite substantial number of small *bailliages* had been consolidated into seven larger *bailliages*, reduced to six under Louis IX. These were subdivided into viscounties, and there were also peacekeeping units known as sergeanties, smaller still. Then there were a number of *prévôtés*, some to govern towns, others as set up by Philip Augustus on the border, which were accountable to Paris. The other officials, nearly all by origin royal administrators, were responsible in the first instance to the Norman exchequer, both financially and judicially.

Lists of royal rights were kept and so too were checklists of the revenues to be collected from each administrative district. Some, like the inventory of the royal domain in the *bailliage* of Rouen (*c.*1261–6), were very detailed; and the complaints of the Normans to the royal *enquêteurs* for 1247, the *Querimoniae Normannorum*, contain many instances of the encroachment of royal rights.

The *baillis* were responsible for drawing up the accounts and presenting them at Rouen and in Paris. By 1230 these documents had become well organised and summarised under headings, a contrast with the less clear pre-conquest exchequer rolls. This change took place earlier than in the French *bailliages* and may reflect a more advanced financial system that influenced the rest of the royal administration. The accounts covered the main royal sources of revenue: the domain, much of which was farmed out to collectors who paid a fixed sum for gathering the money themselves; the forests, which had their own administration; and various rights of lordship such as regalia, hearth tax and levies from the Jews. Extraordinary taxation was collected separately.

The judicial side of the Norman administration underwent less interference from the French officials than the financial machinery. By 1230 Norman law was well developed. The customs of the duchy had crystallised early, probably by 1100, and they were codified early too. The first part of the *Très Ancien Coutûmier* dates from *c.*1200, the second from around 1220. Between 1235 and 1260 the *Summa de legibus Normanniae* (summary of Norman laws) was composed, a far clearer and more systematic account than the comparable *Summa* for Maine and Anjou (dating from about 1245) and reflecting the precocity of Norman legal development.

The Norman *Summa* sets out the principle that existing legal procedure could be modified only where this would define existing rights more clearly, and Louis IX's administrators seem to have respected both this and more detailed aspects of Norman customs. Louis IX's ordinances for the province, dealing with matters such as the alienation of church lands, the abolition of trial by battle and the conduct of royal officials, also followed Norman procedures.

Nevertheless, there were some changes. Certain cases involving royal rights, and complaints against the royal administrators and the higher nobility, went to the *parlement* at Paris. The *parlement* also acted as a court of appeal from the exchequer, and although the cases that went there were few in number, they caused a degree of resentment. At times, too, the royal *enquêteurs* interfered with the course of justice at a lower level. Yet Norman law retained its own defined character throughout the thirteenth century.

The French crown took a firm line with the Norman church. Early in the reign disputes between Blanche of Castile and the archbishop of Rouen caused considerable tensions (pp. 299–300), and royal officials appear to have eroded ecclesiastical rights incrementally. The highest posts in the Norman church went to men from the Île-de-France; indeed, despite Philip Augustus's promises of free elections, royal influence was brought heavily to bear, particularly from the 1240s onwards. Often royal clerks and administrators were chosen, such as royal

clerk John of La Cour at Évreux in 1244 and Odo Clément, abbot of Saint-Denis at Rouen in 1245. When in 1247 the Norman bishops were asked who had the better right to Normandy, Henry III or Louis IX, they found for Louis; their resistance was weaker by far than that of the nobility.[194]

The links of the Norman church with England weakened, as the new generation of men running the cathedral chapters and monasteries used their lands across the channel to swell their coffers. In 1248, for example, against the advice of his own chapter, John bishop of Évreux sold the manor of Bramford to the bishop of Ely, along with an obligation to use the revenues to expiate for the souls of the English kings.[195]

Louis IX made some good appointments, however, such as Odo Rigaud, archbishop of Rouen from 1248 until his death on crusade in 1270. A Franciscan friar and highly-trained theologian, he was a close friend and counsellor of the king, and in the lead-up to the treaty of Paris in 1259 was part of the king's negotiating team with the English.

Odo maintained a full register of his work in Normandy that is an unusually personal account, revealing its author as an able administrator and a just yet compassionate man.[196] In 1251, for example, he went to the priory of Saint-Martin-la-Garenne, where he found that there were four monks, all priests.

> There used to be five. Two of them, . . . William the sacristan and Richard the bell-ringer, are topers and are light headed. [The monks] do not confess each month as the statutes of Pope Gregory require, they eat meat at times when there is no need. Item, although they are often present in the choir, some of them do not sing when the hours are being sung. Item, they go off to the Seine without getting permission from the prior. They owe about eighty pounds.[197]

Most of the problems he had to deal with were like these relatively minor, but what he had to contend with generally was passive unspirituality, a lack of enthusiasm for the religious life, and this may well sum up the condition of the church as a whole in the province.

Military service was levied from the duchy on many occasions during Louis's reign, the king retaining the right to take a money payment instead if he chose. The quotas of knights remained unchanged from the time of Henry II in many cases, as a list drawn up for a campaign against the count of Foix in 1272 illustrates. There seems to have been little friction over this issue. Disputes between towns and *baillis* over tallage and communal rights were however frequent; and although many of the towns prospered it was more the result of the peaceful conditions and an expanding economy than royal favour.

After 1259 Normandy settled down under Capetian domination, a prosperous and relatively well-governed province, but maintaining its own proud identity. The tensions between royal officials and urban communities were to increase

under Philip III and Philip IV, and the days of the independence of the towns were numbered. Yet in the fourteenth century the duchy would regain some of its autonomy (p. 330).

Royal power in the Languedoc

The tensions between the king and the Normans were certainly mild in comparison with the disturbances and hostilities in the Languedoc.[198] By the treaty of Paris of 1229 the Midi was partitioned (p. 330). Raymond VII was allocated a truncated county of Toulouse; the Capetians took the whole of its eastern part, various other possessions of Raymond, including Nîmes, Beaucaire and Saint-Gilles, and the former estates of the Trencavel family. The Venaissin went to the church for a while, although in 1234 Raymond VII received it back from Pope Gregory IX.

Under the terms of the treaty Raymond was also to restore land and possessions to the church, to found a university in Toulouse and to extirpate heresy from his lands. His daughter Joan was to marry a French royal prince, in the event Louis's brother Alfonso of Poitiers, and the two of them were to inherit Toulouse jointly after Raymond's death, notwithstanding the claims of any male heirs of his. The settlement, although better than might have been expected in 1226, was still humiliating to Raymond and he spent more than a decade trying to reverse its terms.

For the persecution of heresy Raymond showed little enthusiasm. Together he and Cardinal Romano Frangipani published a set of constitutions making the bishops responsible for crushing the Cathars. Even the moderate attempts of the episcopate caused resistance, and in 1233 an official attempting to enforce the constitutions was murdered. The bishops' efforts were also largely ineffective. A well-known noble patron of the heretics, Bernard-Oth of Niort, remained free even though he was accused of numerous crimes against the church. Gregory IX intervened and Raymond had Bernard-Oth taken into custody, but at the same time the pope ordered an inquisition in the Languedoc. It was composed not of bishops but of Dominican friars acting on behalf of the papacy.

The first inquisitors were zealous in the extreme. In 1233–6 they convicted many heretics, both living and dead. Many of the living were burnt, and some who were dead and buried were disinterred. This provoked violent reaction. There was bloodshed in Narbonne in 1233–5, and in 1235 the citizens of Toulouse were so angry with the activities of the inquisitors and the infringement of their own privileges that they stormed the Dominican friary in the city, and ejected not only all the friars but the bishop as well. Raymond VII protested on the citizens' behalf; Pope Gregory IX first asked the inquisitors to moderate their zeal and then suspended them for three years (1237–40).

The inquisition caused great unrest and consternation throughout the Languedoc, but in the lands ceded to the king there were other tensions too. In 1212 Simon de Montfort had promulgated the statute of Pamiers: while outlawing venal practices including the sale of justice, he decreed that the customs of Paris must be followed in the Languedoc. This in effect introduced feudal tenures and laws and these were harshly upheld. Simon's own men were given

substantial holdings in the area, and although in Toulouse these grants, and the customs of Paris, were rescinded in 1229, many were confirmed in the lands retained by the king.

It is true that many of the ancient nobility of the region were given some compensation, and some of their lands back, but two major fiefs were firmly established for Guy of Lévis, marshal of Simon de Montfort, at Mirepoix, and for Philip de Montfort, Simon's nephew, south of Albi. Other lesser fiefs were created as well in a way which followed northern customs. The result was considerable tension between the inhabitants of the lands and their new overlords. In the 1270s Guy III of Mirepoix would uphold his rights to take the lands of his tenants who were leaving his estates; the peasants insisted on their ancient rights to sell or alienate their own lands. By the end of the fourteenth century the older written law generally overruled these northern customs in most important matters; but in the thirteenth century they still caused resentment.

Further tensions were caused by the conduct of the royal officials in the *sénéchaussées* of Beaucaire and Carcassonne. They seem to have succeeded in mulcting churchmen and laity alike; their corruption was such that Gregory IX requested Louis IX to take remedial action. He did do so, but not before violence had erupted in the area. In 1240, Raymond Trencavel invaded from Aragon (pp. 262–3) and with widespread local support seized western Languedoc and Carcassonne. Royal power in the region was threatened, but the royal army headed by John of Beaumont crushed the rising with extreme brutality.

Raymond VII had not been involved, but in 1242 he too rebelled, joining Henry III's coalition with the Poitevin nobility against the French king. This rising too was crushed, and Louis IX was only prevented from taking harsh action against Raymond by the intercession of Blanche of Castile. Lacking a male heir, and his attempts to wed Sancia of Provence having been blocked in 1241, in 1245 he negotiated with Raymond-Berengar of Provence for the hand of his youngest daughter and heiress Beatrice. Raymond-Berengar died, however, and the heiress and her lands went to Louis's brother Charles of Anjou.

The defeat of the rebellions in Languedoc was followed by severe reprisals. There was a strong feeling that the heretics had played a major part in them and the inquisition was brought back with additional powers and redoubled zeal. By the treaty of Lorris in 1243, Raymond VII promised the king to obtain oaths of obedience from his subjects and to support the king and the inquisition. This in effect reiterated the terms of the 1229 treaty. Raymond realised at last, however, that it would be prudent to take firm action against the heretics. The key Albigensian stronghold of Montségur fell to his troops in 1244, leaving the heretics fatally weakened, although they would continue their struggle for survival at Quéribus until 1255.

The established nobles of the region, many of whom had been important patrons of the heretics, were again dispossessed of their lands and many became the victims of the inquisition, their estates going to the crown. Only the ancient noble houses of Lautrec, Narbonne and Foix survived. Many of the former Languedocian leaders went to the Holy Land as crusaders, and men such as Oliver of Termes ended their lives there.

The royal armies, the inquisition and the efforts of Raymond in support of the king subjugated the Languedoc. Alfonso of Poitiers, who succeeded Raymond in Toulouse in 1249, was to work alongside the king in maintaining control. In the royal lands in the region, Louis now attempted to improve the conduct of his officials, dissatisfaction with which had contributed towards the unrest of the early 1240s. He sent round *enquêteurs* in 1247 and 1255, he strove to be scrupulously fair in his judgements, and in 1254 he promulgated his ordinance for the better conduct of the royal officials. In the same year, he issued ordinances for the reform of the cities of Beaucaire and Nîmes.

In general, however, while some local assemblies were permitted to meet there was a marked loss of liberty in the region: for example, the governing consuls of Beaucaire and Nîmes were replaced by royal men. Royal officials eroded other urban privileges of minting and charging tolls and trade. Yet the influences were not all one way. The written law of the south based on Roman law exercised a marked impression on the customary law of the north, and in the early fourteenth century its practitioners, jurists such as William of Nogaret and Peter Flotte, were to play an important role at the royal court (pp. 393–394).

Prosperity would now return to the Languedoc as it recovered from decades of devastation. As local and international trade revived, new towns such as Pavie and Bologne were founded. By the end of the Capetian era, the great fortified towns like Carcassonne would symbolise and embody royal power, and the huge brick cathedral at Albi (Image 5.11), begun in 1282, fortress-like, austere and dominant, manifested the power of the church and its triumph over heresy.

IMAGE 5.11 Albi cathedral, east end

Photo © E. Hallam

The king's brothers: Robert of Artois, Alfonso of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou

Despite occasional disagreements between them, the king was devoted to his three brothers. Most cherished was Robert of Artois, his companion of his early years and invested in 1237 with Artois on the occasion of his marriage to Matilda of Brabant. All this gave Robert considerable standing within the empire: his wife was Frederick II's cousin. A lover of music and song, Robert enjoyed playing practical jokes. Regarded by some contemporaries as an outstanding knight, and by others as cowardly and impulsive, Robert seemingly played a major part in the failure of Louis's crusade in Egypt, where he lost his life. Notwithstanding this, the king revered his memory and regarded him as a martyr.[199]

Alfonso of Poitiers, Louis's brother, has long been seen as a close and loyal confidant and counsellor of the king, but Chenard suggests that his prime concern was, rather, the quiet and purposeful pursuit of his own interests without undermining the powers of the crown. Although overseeing two substantial principalities, Poitou and, through his wife Joan, the county of Toulouse, he was a somewhat self-effacing man who left far less of an impression on his contemporaries than did Charles.[200] Joinville depicts the young Alfonso as a chivalrous figure with a penchant for courtly pursuits and gambling; but after 1252 he became severely ill, probably from an infection contracted while on crusade. He acted as regent for his brother the king from 1252–4, but thereafter withdrew from court. Normally resident in Paris in his grand town house, he pursued his dream of a further crusade, ran his lands through *enquêteurs* and kept careful records of his official activities.

Alfonso had his own household, his own chancery and court; and his government had a style and an impact of its own which was quite distinct from that of Louis IX. In his correspondence, he emerges as a rather cold figure, a thorough administrator who could delegate only with difficulty, and who was often greedy and rapacious. While always respecting the prerogatives of the crown, his main goals appear to have been the upholding and consolidating of his own rights and the gaining of maximum profits from them, and these he pursued in a pragmatic and effective way. Yet he also provided moderately fair government, winning him praise in a Rutebeuf poem.

Alfonso was assigned Poitou as an apanage by Louis VIII's will, and he was invested with it in 1241. This was a troublous land to deal with. He and Louis had to crush the regional lords of the area, notorious with the French and English alike for perfidy. In 1242, following the collapse of the rebellion of Hugh of Lusignan in alliance with the English king, he secured the overlordship of La Marche, Aunis and Saintonge. Alfonso's settlement in 1248 with Archambaud, lord of Bourbon, regularised his authority here, but while he also claimed the lordship of Clermont, in 1255 this was judged by *parlement* to belong to the crown.

Alfonso strengthened and streamlined comital administration, relying on relatively few key local officials, lay and ecclesiastical. He became unpopular with the some of his baronage for his insistence on the rendability of many castles and his limitations on the bearing of arms and judicial duels. *Enquêtes*, appeals in the

count's court, were encouraged as an alternative to the last, eliciting protests that the customs of Poitou were being overturned. The descendants of the more turbulent regional lords of Poitou looked back to the glory days of the rule of the English kings, when their fathers had been the true lords of the land, with nostalgia. This is a measure of Alfonso's achievements here, although much of it was accomplished through his working with and through the more loyal regional lords, in time-honoured Capetian fashion.

Alfonso's already significant holding was augmented when in 1249 his wife's father Raymond VII, count of Toulouse, died. Louis already held lower Languedoc, and Alfonso now inherited the other part of the region, the county of Toulouse, the northern Albigeois, Rouergue, Venaissin, part of Quercy and the Agenais – the last two claimed by Henry III. Since the 1229 treaty Raymond VII had increased the comital domains in the region, which gave the count a more solid power base. Alfonso was on crusade when Raymond died, and there was resistance to his succession. Many of the towns refused oaths of obedience, but Blanche of Castile as regent took a firm line with them that secured Toulouse for the Capetian prince.

Further, Alfonso did well from the treaty of Corbeil, made by Louis with Aragon in 1258, when the Aragonese king renounced his claims to part of Rouergue. But the treaty of Paris with the English king gave Henry III the reversion of Agenais, Quercy and Saintonge after Alfonso's death. After the demise of both Alfonso and Joan on the way home from the crusade in 1271 the issue of the Toulouse succession would emerge again; but in the event all their lands went to the French crown.

In his lands of Toulouse, Alfonso's men encroached gradually but firmly on the independence of the nobles and the towns. The prince streamlined his administration by reducing six *sénéchaussées* – the seneschal exercising the powers of the prince by delegation – to four. He was strongly opposed to major representative institutions, and where in the Midi assemblies met to ratify matters such as extraordinary taxation these were on a very local level, a contrast with the days of Raymond VII, when large feudal assemblies had gathered regularly. Resistance broke out in Toulouse, Montpellier and Albi, but this was relatively minor because, although he was the king's brother, Alfonso was also the husband of Raymond VII's heir, countess Joan of Toulouse.

The efficiency of Alfonso's administration evidently had a significant impact in securing his powers. To survey the conduct of his officials he appointed *enquêteurs*, friars and government administrators, on a regular basis after 1251 across his lands. Unlike Louis's *enquêteurs* whose role was to right wrongs, they had an administrative function, collecting taxes such as the crusading aids and acting in a wider judicial capacity as a check on the local officers. In about 1254, Alfonso issued an ordinance for the good conduct of his officials, which closely echoed that of Louis IX in its tone and content. Another was issued in 1270, probably in response to complaints about exactions of his officials when levying the crusading aid.

Like the king, Alfonso introduced a centralised uniform coinage in his lands without suppressing local ones; this greatly benefited commerce as well as administration. The financial organisation of Poitou was overhauled on his orders in the 1240s, as a register for the years 1243–8 demonstrates. In this, the accounts covering the first two years are deficient, but by 1245 the receipts and expenses are tabulated and listed under headings on the model of the royal accounts.[201]

Alfonso clearly profited from the careful consolidation of his domain: surviving financial records suggest that in the year 1258 his fixed revenues alone amounted to some £31,000. These were augmented by less regular but substantial sums raised by feudal aids and the hearth tax: in 1263–5 the yield from the hearth tax in Quercy and Agenais alone amounted to £26,000. The total receipts for 1258 came to about £72,000 and those for 1268 to £103,000. Although caution needs to be exercised with such calculations, these are very substantial sums, amounting to about a third of Louis's income: in normal circumstances the count's revenues should have been sufficient for his needs.[202]

In all these documents, and in his administrative correspondence covering the years 1267–70, Alfonso emerges as a tough master of his lands and a thorough administrator. Not only did he crush the turbulent barons of Poitou and bring them under comital control, he also became an only moderately unpopular ruler in the Languedoc, a land strongly opposed to the encroachments of the French crown.

Charles of Anjou, Louis's youngest brother, was invested with his lands of Anjou and Maine in 1246: these he would hold until 1291 when he passed them to Charles of Valois. Although he was to expend relatively little time and energy on these fiefs, they were to give him and his future dynasty, which would play a key role in the Mediterranean for many generations, their name: the Angevins. The county of Provence, outside the borders of France, which came to him through his wife Beatrice, was a vital part of his dominions and far more difficult to control. A ruthless self-aggrandizer, who often, as in the case of Hainault, attempted to extend his powers, Charles nevertheless respected royal rights and ultimately fell into line in matters of the greatest significance.[203]

Like his brother's fief of Poitou, Anjou and Maine had a troubled history, but shortly before their transfer to Charles, the king summoned an assembly at Orléans to determine the customs of Anjou in respect of relief and wardship. Its work provided a stimulus towards the codification of the customs of Anjou, which was compiled by 1260. Louis also sent *enquêteurs* into Maine and Anjou to review the conduct and practices of the royal officials who had been running these lands since 1229, and ensured that action was taken to remedy abuses.

Once invested with them, Charles was rarely seen in his northern lands, but in her study of this prince Dunbabin suggests that, rather than exercising arbitrary power, he appointed able administrators who ensured that receipts – which may by the 1270s have been as much as £13,000 *tournois* each year – continued to flow into his coffers. His support for merchants and moneylenders helped to support

the growth of trade in his northern dominions. Overall, his absentee régime of enforcing peace and justice while extracting substantial levels of taxation seems to have been accepted there.

Louis IX, Henry III of England and the matter of Gascony

The relationship between the king and one great territorial prince, Henry III, king of England and duke of Gascony, was particularly complex and troubled, especially until the Treaty of Paris in 1259.[204] Underlying the relationship of the two kings was the widely-accepted sense that the Capetian monarchy was the senior, as expressed in letters between the two sides, where the French king always came first.[205] Far less personally effective and politically successful than Louis, Henry's subordination was further emphasised when in 1259 he became Louis's vassal. But Henry was also a great admirer of Louis, and the two kings seem to have developed strong personal bonds of friendship.

Although Henry continued to claim Normandy, Anjou and the duchy of Aquitaine, in 1226 in practice he held only part of the last: Gascony and some of the Saintonge. Moreover, his long-disputed claim to the overlordship of the county of Toulouse was greatly weakened by the agreement of Raymond VII and Louis IX in 1229, which made the Capetians Raymond's heirs. His right to Gascony was based on hereditary succession and in 1254 he declared that the duchy and the island of Oléron were inalienable from the English crown – although he would pay homage to Louis for the duchy in 1259. The English case that Gascony was an allod, free of any feudal obligation, was not fully articulated until the end of the thirteenth century, but it is possible that within the duchy this view of its special status within the French kingdom was prevalent far earlier, and may have informed Henry's views of his powers here.

Despite their ties of kinship through Eleanor of Aquitaine, the relationship between the two royal houses was not straightforward. During Louis's minority, his father's failed bid for the English throne (pp. 167–168) must still have rankled with the Plantagenets. Moreover, Blanche and Louis VIII were known to hold a particular reverence for the cult of the murdered archbishop Thomas Becket at Canterbury, and were honoured by the special prayers of its monks. In 1240 Blanche and Louis IX would offer hospitality to the scholarly archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund of Abingdon, when, having fallen out with Henry III and his own monks, he was journeying to Rome. But he declined, and perhaps in conscious imitation of Becket made his way to the abbey of Pontigny. Following his death and the rapid growth of a cult there, Edmund was canonised in 1247; Blanche and Louis IX were both present at his magnificent translation ceremony later that year.[206]

In 1225–7 Richard of Cornwall, the king's brother, had consolidated the English hold on Henry's remaining lands and began to put administrative structures in place in Gascony, under a seneschal. With this went the strengthening of judicial rights, some modest raising of taxation, the reclamation of key strongholds from disloyal vassals, the fortification of key towns such as Bayonne, Bordeaux and Dax,

and the building of new castles, such as Saint-Emilion in 1237. The powers of the seneschal and his council however remained very limited.

While modest progress was being made in Gascony, Poitou remained a highly disputed area between the French and English kings. Henry III waged unsuccessful campaigns in 1230 and 1242–3 (pp. 258, 263–264), after which Alfonso of Poitiers gained the ascendancy – although skirmishes and disputes continued in the area. In 1248, prior to Louis's departure on crusade, Henry, on papal encouragement, agreed not to attack his lands in his absence: given his limited resources, this also gave Henry a chance to recoup. Henry himself took the cross in 1250 but after Louis's disastrous showing in Egypt, refused to provide men and money unless the French king agreed to return some of his former lands. Louis's return in 1254 would however usher in a period of greater co-operation between the two kings.

Gascony meanwhile remained a highly troublesome region to control. In 1248 Henry III gave Simon de Montfort overall authority here, with the remit of enforcing order. This Simon did in ways regarded by the Gascons as disproportionately harsh: arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, exile. A violent reaction ensued, under the leadership of Gaston of Béarn, endangering English authority, and in 1253–4 Henry III was forced to travel to the duchy to quell it. He waged an effective campaign and the insurgents gradually submitted. Although stripped of his power in Gascony, Simon de Montfort remained well-connected at the French royal court, where he enjoyed a high level of prestige. He was even considered as a possible regent for France during the breakdown of authority following the death of Blanche of Castile (p. 274).

As part of his settlement, in 1254 Henry III now made peace with Alfonso X, king of Castile, who had supported the rebels, and arranged that his young son, Edward, known as the Lord Edward and later Edward I of England, should marry Eleanor of Castile. Edward was given authority to rule Gascony as an inalienable part of the English realm, and his administrators brought greater order to the duchy, setting up an exchequer at Bordeaux, levying hearth taxes, and making a survey of his lands and rights. He had his own ducal seal, and in one charter he was styled as prince and lord, ruling in Gascony.[207]

On his way home from Gascony, Henry III visited the tombs of his ancestors at Fontevraud and St Edmund's shrine at Pontigny, and then travelled to Paris, at Louis's invitation – even though the two kings were technically at war. Louis met Henry for the first time, and their queens, Margaret and Eleanor of Provence, were reunited after many years, along with their mother and their two younger sisters, the wives of Charles of Anjou and Richard of Cornwall. The celebrations were lavish and costly, and strong personal bonds were forged between the two rulers and their families.[208]

Henry's personal delight with his visit and his admiration for the French king was not matched with any political gains: Louis was unwilling to return any of his lands and was unsympathetic towards the papal scheme to award the throne of Sicily to Henry's second son, Edmund. He did however soon afterwards send

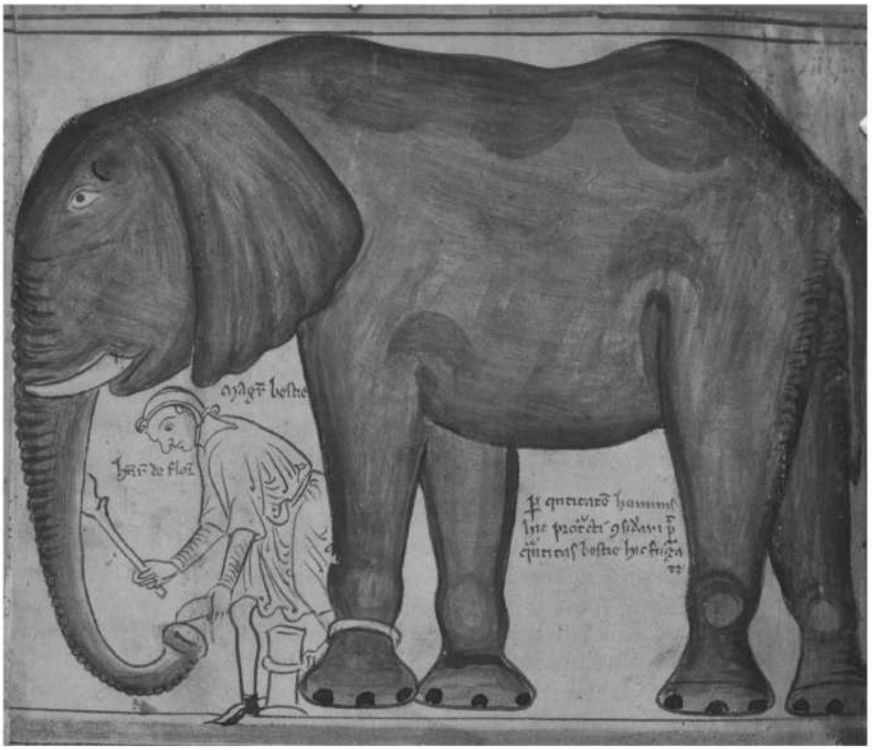


IMAGE 5.12 Elephant presented by Louis IX to Henry III of England, *c.*1254

From Matthew Paris's *Chronica Maiora* at the Parker Library, MS 16I, f. ii r, © Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

Henry the impressive gift of an elephant for the royal menagerie at the Tower of London (Image 5.12), and on the urging of Queen Margaret did not give the exiled Lusignans refuge in his kingdom.[209]

In 1258, the French and English kings agreed the terms of the treaty of Paris, which was ratified and then published in 1259.[210] Its terms would have been almost unthinkable to Philip Augustus and John. For Louis, this was a regularisation of the anomalous position of Henry of England in France – just as Louis had, also in 1258, made a settlement with James of Aragon. Henry, in the febrile lead-up to the Provisions of Oxford, which subjected him to the dictates of Simon de Montfort and a council of 15 barons, was for his part intent on affirming his royal credentials.

The English king relinquished his claims to Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine and Poitou, but the French king recognised his rights to Gascony, Bordeaux and Bayonne provided that he paid homage for them and became a peer of France. Louis also gave Henry substantial sums of money – to be of great value in his wars with his barons – and promised the reversion of Agenais, Quercy and Saintonge, held by Alfonso of Poitiers, after Alfonso's death. In the meantime, a rent was to be

paid for these lands. Henry's ancestral rights in the dioceses of Périgueux, Limoges and Cahors, which lay between La Marche and Toulouse, were returned to him. Both kings conceded a great deal, and each was bitterly criticised by his baronage as a result.

Following the treaty's ratification in England, in 1259 Henry made a further stay in Paris, this time for several weeks. Amid lavish and lengthy celebrations and ostentatious displays of piety, the king of England paid homage to Louis IX and was welcomed as a peer of France. At Louis's request, he renewed payments for prayers for his – and Louis's own – royal forebears at Fontevraud, and left France only when Louis advised him that it was shameful and harmful for his kingdom for him to remain. Henry's devotion to Louis remained undimmed, and he again voyaged to Paris in 1262, a visit marked by legal and diplomatic discussions, glittering banquets and piety contests between the two kings. Despite his own deep commitment to pious activities, Louis disrupted Henry's frequent hearing of masses by closing the churches along his route to the *parlement*, seemingly to keep their negotiations on track.[211]

Louis IX had sworn to protect the liberties of Gascony, so Henry III's son Edward, frustrated by the terms of the treaty and his disempowerment in the duchy, found this an empty promise. For Gascony was now opened up for the first time to the final and invasive appellate jurisdiction of the French royal court. Lawsuits between Gascons and the subjects of Louis on matters such as the inheritance of Turenne, which had previously been settled on the borders of Gascony, now went to Paris for resolution. Gradually too the rights of the French king to levy service inside the duchy were strengthened, overriding local custom. Another bone of contention was the overlordship, lands and rights in the dioceses of Périgueux, Limoges and Cahors, which had formed a part of the duchy of Aquitaine, ceded to the English crown. This grant, while slow to be fulfilled, was to cause strong ill-feeling in the area and a hostility to Louis so deep-rooted that in 1297 the inhabitants of these areas would not celebrate his canonisation.[212]

In the longer term the French crown seems to have fared better than the English from the treaty.[213] More immediately, however, Louis's financial support would help Henry in the baronial wars. And in 1264, in the Mise of Amiens, an arbitration between Henry and his barons, Louis firmly upheld the rights of his kinsman and rival as a fellow king. The text of the sentence that Louis gave was based on the pleadings of Henry III's lawyers, but its general tenor seems to reflect the king's own opinions on royal authority and his unwillingness to deprive a fellow ruler of what Louis judged to be his legitimate rights.

Louis allowed that Henry III should have full power and unrestricted rule, saving only that this should not derogate from existing customs, a strongly authoritarian view of royal as against baronial power, and perhaps a product of the king's experiences during his minority. Contemporary evidence suggests that the king gave judgement as Henry's overlord rather than as an arbiter finding according to natural law, implying that Louis believed that Henry's act of performing liege homage had created a French royal jurisdiction even in those cases where Henry

was acting solely as king of England.[214] A century earlier, Louis VII had been struggling to hold his own against Henry II; but now the balance of power between their descendants had seen a dramatic reversal.

Criticisms of the king

Although the man and his accomplishments were rapidly bathed by posterity in a roseate and sanctified glow, from his contemporaries Louis's activities, both political and personal, elicited much criticism. His achievements in extending royal powers throughout the kingdom are today seen as magisterial, but provoked much negative reaction from his subjects.[215]

His insistence that the nobility be subject to the laws of the land, as exemplified in the trial of Enguerran of Coucy in 1259, was deeply resented by many (pp. 313–314). One poet wrote bitterly of the king's attempts to limit private wars and to forbid trial by battle, both highly valued baronial prerogatives. The men of France, says the writer, are no longer free. They have been deprived of their franchises because they are judged by *enquête*. France is no longer *la douce France*, it is a land of slaves. Declared the poet (or poets) Rutebeuf, the king was cutting down unsuitably on the expenses of the royal household and denying many nobles their proper place at court.[216]

The value of such rights to the nobility is amply demonstrated in the vehemence with which they were to claim them in the unrest of 1314–15, ironically in the name of Saint Louis himself (p. 392). Furthermore, major concern was expressed by many about the royal lands and rights which the king, in his quest for just arbitration and peace, was deemed to have granted away: the treaty of Paris in 1259 was the source of considerable resentment.

Louis's crusades were attacked as ill-judged and undertaken under the influence of others; and his constant need to raise money for them was equated with rapaciousness that was bad for the kingdom. The papal tenth agreed by Innocent IV to fund Louis's expedition to Egypt was extended over five years, eliciting great resistance from the church and nobility and accusations of avarice against king and pope. A survey of 1260 revealed that many of the towns were heavily in debt as the result of repeated demands for aids from the king: their hostility reached such a pitch that in 1267 a number refused to contribute, riots broke out and a royal tax collector was killed at Chorges. Their opposition had to be overcome by force.[217]

Much resentment was directed against the king in the lands that he, his family and forebears had gained by conquest. In Normandy this was fairly low-level, elicited by a shift in power towards Paris. In the Languedoc, devastated by decades of warfare, where royal power was cemented through the activities of the inquisition and local liberties and customs were often disregarded, resistance was strong and often violent. In the border lands of the duchy of Gascony, returned to the English crown under the terms of the Treaty of Paris in 1259, Louis became so detested a

figure for this act that the inhabitants refused to celebrate his canonisation in 1297 (p. 392). More apocalyptically still, the king's failures on crusade were construed by the *pastoureaux* as divine judgment on France itself (p. 273).

The king also attracted excoriation for his way of life. In a hostile sermon, preached in 1255 (p. 290), the Parisian scholar William of Saint-Amour clearly though indirectly accused Louis of hypocrisy. He complained that the king imitated the poor, yet he mulcted the kingdom to pay for wars in which Christians were killed. Nothing in the scriptures suggests that kings should dress humbly: Jerome says that they should use their wealth for their kingdom, and maintaining royal dignity in magnificence and state is an important part of this. The king should render justice and he should not be surrounded and counselled by self-righteous vagrants who should be out begging their own bread. Nor does canon law suggest that a king should be a vagabond.[218] The king sent William into exile for his pains.

Such open criticism of the king's ascetic lifestyle and his reliance on the friars found expression also in the poems attributed to Rutebeuf, a supporter (or supporters) of William, who accused the mendicants of heresy, hypocrisy, greed, tyranny over the church, and menacing the laws of Christ. Their original state of poverty was contrasted with their present wealth and power. Other religious orders favoured by the king also came in for censure, and Louis was portrayed as at best misguided and gullible. Similar points were made by John of Meung in the second part of the *Roman de la Rose*.[219] Moreover, Louis's measures to outlaw usury while drawing on the services of the Lombard moneylenders and mulcting the Jews were judged hypocritical by rabbi Meir ben Simeon of Narbonne (p. 297).

Even Louis's closest associates found some aspects of his behaviour concerning: his confessors thought his asceticism had become too extreme and undignified for a king, and judged his cruel punishments to blasphemers excessive – and dared to tell him. Louis was clearly well aware of many of the personal criticisms being levelled against him: those who went too far and who breached his moral norms might be banished or harshly punished.

Yet when confronted by critics in person he might simply accept their harsh words as a trial from God. William of Saint-Pathus recounts that he took no offence when one of his chamberlains openly described him as no more than a man, just like any other. Moreover, during a hearing before him in *parlement* in Paris, he was publicly berated by the plaintiff, a woman named Sarrete. She rebuked Louis for being like a friar or a priest: unfit to be king, he should be drummed out of the kingdom. His attendants were all for giving her a beating, but Louis humbly agreed with her that he was not worthy to be king, and wished that God would find someone worthier for the task. He arranged for a payment to be made to Sarrete.[220] Joinville describes the frustrations of his counsellors with what they saw as his excessive spending on the poor and sick. The king's response was that it was better to spend extravagantly on Christian charity than 'through worldly pride or

vainglory'.[221] Steadfast in his religious and moral resolve, the king was, it seems, equally unyielding in the face of kindhearted advice and bitter personal attacks.

The achievements of Louis IX

Louis IX's instructions (*enseignements*) to his son Philip (III), given before he died, reveal his views about the duties and values of kingship by which he had sought to live and rule. He exhorts Philip to live a just and Christian life, showing pious obedience to the Church and seeking to remove sin from his realm, especially heresy and blasphemy. Philip should always seek the company of worthy men, and be just to all his subjects, giving the benefit of the doubt to the poor over the rich until he is sure of the truth. He should strive to uphold justice and peace, not waging war on fellow Christians. And he is enjoined to ensure that his local administrators, the *baillis* and *prévôts*, behave properly, to keep the expenses of his household at a moderate level and always to return property to its rightful owners.[222]

Here the king is seemingly beginning to construct his own sacral image. But he was in many respects far from exemplifying a saint in a stained-glass window, as so often portrayed by posterity. His reputation was unmatched, and his successes were many. Yet they were tempered by his failures and by his personal flaws, stemming from his tendency to driven, volatile and unpredictable behaviour.

In his early years the very image of the pious warrior king and *prud'homme*, Louis impressed contemporaries with his defeat of the English in 1242. He guarded his rights to military service and to castles throughout his reign. Yet as a crusader he displayed shortcomings as a planner and strategist and was at times ineffective as a military leader, as Joinville reveals through his narrative. The king's impetuosity and impatience of taking advice from his counsellors was a significant factor in bringing him and his armies to disaster – and would lead to his death in 1270.[223] But his crusades united his barons behind him and wholly transformed the scale and organisation of warfare in France; and right across the kingdom, great prestige accrued to service to the king himself. From this his successors would greatly benefit.

From the administrative, financial and legal records of the reign there emerges a strong ruler, a constructive and innovative lawgiver, an able and principled administrator with a concern for those governed and with a powerful grasp of the workings of the royal bureaucracy. His overhaul of local government in the years immediately before he departed on crusade had a significant impact in improving the governance of his lands. These reforms he built on and further developed after his return from Outremer.

It was however very difficult to enforce such measures, which often cut across local interests and aroused great opposition. Moreover, the administrative arrangements he set up began to look bloated and costly by the end of the thirteenth century. Whilst two decades of uninterrupted peace undoubtedly fostered economic prosperity in the kingdom, the need to finance his enormous spending on his crusades bore heavily on many of his subjects, caused great resentment and may well have been highly disruptive.[224] There were evidently many factors at play in

driving the economic turbulence of the 1260s, but the impact of a longstanding war economy may have been one of them.

Louis's reign saw a significant rebalancing in powers between the king and the barons, as the great men of the realm increasingly supported the king as crusader, and saw their capacity to wage private wars significantly curtailed. Royal ordinances and the new royal coinage began to take effect across the kingdom, and the spread of royal justice into the principalities gathered momentum in Louis's reign as well, as they came under a growing influence from the crown. These developments met with hostility during his reign, and built upon by Louis's successors, would provoke far stronger reactions in the early fourteenth century (pp. 400, 404–409).

Such was his moral and political authority that the king was highly respected as an arbiter and mediator. Yet at times he acted without heeding the advice of his counsellors, and consequently sometimes infuriated them, as over the treaty of Paris concluded in 1259 with Henry III (pp. 338–339). And despite his apparent statesmanship, nor did Louis's judgements always prove effective in the long term, as events in Flanders and England showed.

Louis's settlement with Henry III in 1259, although broadly speaking a wise move to regularise an anomalous situation, provoked great opposition immediately and created many more problems and contentious issues in the long term. Neither warfare nor negotiation had resolved these by the end of the Capetian period and they were to erupt into the Hundred Years War (pp. 433–434). The king's support of the conquests of Charles of Anjou at the end of his reign, made in furtherance of papal policy, were moreover to give the French crown a close involvement with the political aims of the papacy, and also a stake in Italy. Both these developments too were to have significant consequences in the longer term.

In exemplifying and enhancing the values and powers of a sacral Capetian king, Louis was singularly successful, building on the achievements of his predecessors to redefine the nature of monarchy. His pride in his Capetian, Carolingian and Merovingian forebears is reflected in his patronage of the Saint-Denis historiographers whose role it was to promulgate this special heritage, and in the personal interest he took in the creation of the great royal pantheon for their tombs in the rebuilt abbey church. His spectacular acquisition of the relics of the passion and their housing in the impressive new Sainte-Chapelle in Paris greatly enhanced the prestige and sacral role of his dynasty, reflected in its magnificent decoration freighted with royal symbolism, and in elaborately staged religious processions and ceremonies. The carefully calibrated design of his gold coins, issued across the realm in the 1260s, linked the royal *fleur de lys* with Christ's cross.

Like his predecessors, too, Louis was a generous – to some an over-generous – patron of religious orders, in his later years showing particularly strong support for institutions that cherished the poor and sick. In respect of the French church, his moral and religious reputation seems to have sustained him against criticism for the build-up of royal authority. This was also the case for his heavy taxation of wealthy ecclesiastical institutions in conjunction with the pope, although their voracious financial demands clearly cost many of these communities dear. Such a high level

of royal control stood his successors in great stead and enabled them to exercise unprecedented powers over the church.

In his character and achievements Louis IX overshadowed contemporary rulers. Whilst Henry III shared many of his pious interests and was his rival in ostentatious religious devotions and benefactions, it was Louis who was canonised in the end. The French king was also far more successful in political dealings than Henry III. He and his mother overcame the French baronage where Henry was caught up in a long war of attrition with their English equivalents, and criticisms of Louis from contemporary writers were mild in comparison with the hostility shown to Henry from many English chroniclers.

Equally, the Emperor Frederick II, a remarkable character and a powerful figure on the European stage, was a more successful crusader than Louis. He gained by negotiation what Louis failed to do in two expeditions that cost dear in lives and capital. But his abilities and achievements have sometimes been overestimated,[225] and his dynasty was soon supplanted in Sicily by Louis's own.

Successive popes, drawn increasingly into secular concerns, saw an erosion in their moral authority. Their deployment for the overtly political purpose of ecclesiastical censures, of their powers of taxation and of the ultimate spiritual sanction of crusading created great opposition from many clerical and lay leaders alike, as did also their abuse of their power to make their own nominations to valuable benefices. To many contemporaries the king of France appeared to embody moral Christian leadership far more effectively than the vicars of Christ.

In France, the reign of Louis IX marked the culmination of many of the developments in royal power that had gathered momentum during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The royal lands, the king's power base in the kingdom, were finally consolidated and the conquests from the Plantagenets and the house of Toulouse legitimised. The king's feudal superiority was reinforced, his role as sovereign enhanced, and his image and reputation as lawgiver and as God's anointed were given great lustre.

Royal administration, both central and local, royal finance and royal justice all made great strides during his reign, and although they had their defects, still they were strongly influenced by the king's own ideals of fair and honest government. This was an authoritarian regime, as the French church found, but to resist such a pious Christian and firm ruler as Louis IX was difficult. As a result, the French king became pre-eminent not only in France but also in western Europe.

Despite his flaws, Louis IX was a man of remarkable qualities and abilities. Far from being a 'perfect' king, he had personal failings and suffered political disasters. His reign was not a golden age: it was a time of failures as well as of successes. His unsuccessful crusades, his excessive reliance on the friars, his expanding administration all aroused strong opposition. In his quest to purge society of its ills, he was capable of great cruelty, especially to heretics and Jews. His judgements and arbitrations were not always practical and sometimes created difficulties. Many of the developments of his reign were to have unhappy consequences in the late Capetian period (pp. 369–370).

His reign was in many ways a watershed, a time when the nature of royal power inside and outside the kingdom changed, just as ideas about the nature of the French and other kingdoms modified and developed. Above all the French king, supported by the fruits of massive material gains, stopped concentrating on internal politics, on wars with the princes, and appeared as the leading protagonist on the greater European stage.

Notes

1 L. F. Field, trans., *The Sanctity of Louis IX: Early Lives of Saint Louis by Geoffrey of Beaulieu and William of Chartres* (Ithaca and London, 2014), 62.
2 M. C. Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 2008), 197–239.
3 F. Lacaille, 'L'image de saint Louis dans la peinture au xix^{e} siècle', in P.Y. le Pogam, ed., *Saint Louis*, (Paris, 2014), 23–35.
4 See J. Richard, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 1983), abridged and translated as *Saint Louis. Crusader King of France*, ed. S. Lloyd, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge and Paris, 1992); W. C. Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade: A Study in Rulership* (Princeton, 1979); J. Le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 1996) and *Saint Louis*, trans. G. E. Gollrad (Nôtre Dame, 2009); W. C. Jordan, *Ideology and Royal Power in Medieval France* (Aldershot, 2001), no. IV, 209–17; L. Grant, *Blanche of Castile, Queen of France* (London, 2016).
5 Jordan, *Ideology and Royal Power*, no. IV, 209–17; Richard, *Saint Louis*, ed. Lloyd, 74–5; Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 376–99; E. R. Labande, 'Quelques traits de caractère du roi Saint Louis', *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité*, i (1974), 135–46.
6 *Joinville, Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. and trans. J. Monfrin (Paris, 2010); a good new Penguin Classics English translation is by C. Smith, as *John of Joinville*, *The Life of Saint Louis*, in *Chronicles of the Crusades* (London, 2008), 137–336.
7 C. Smith, *Crusading in the Age of Joinville* (Burlington, 2006), 47–74; M. C. Gaposchkin, 'The place of the Crusades in the sanctification of Saint Louis', in *Crusades: Medieval Worlds in Conflict*, eds T. F. Madden, J. L. Naus and V. Ryan (Burlington, 2010), 195–209; cf. Monfrin, *Vie de Saint Louis*, ed., introduction, lxvi–lxxvi. Monfrin's view is that the whole of the book was written between 1305 and 1309.
8 Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 376–98.
9 *Joinville, Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. and trans. J. Monfrin (Paris, 2010), introduction, xxvi–ii. The translation used here is C. Smith, *John of Joinville*, *The Life of Saint Louis*, in *Chronicles of the Crusades* (London, 2008), 137–336.
10 M. C. Gaposchkin and P. B. Katz, *Blessed Louis: The Most Glorious of Kings. Texts Relating to the Cult of Saint Louis of France* (Nôtre Dame, 2012), 20–1. This volume contains editions of important sources relating to the cult.
11 Field, *Sanctity of Louis IX*, 18–38.
12 Guillaume de Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint Louis, Roi de France*, ed. M. C. d'Espagne (Paris, 1971); Gaposchkin, *Making of Saint Louis*, 33–43.
13 J. le Goff, 'Saint Louis et la parole royale', in J. Dufournet and L. Harf, *Le prince et son historien: la vie de Saint Louis de Joinville* (Paris, 1997), 7–21.
14 Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 240–1.
15 See especially Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade*, and W. C. Jordan, *Men at the Center, Redemptive Governance under Louis IX* (Budapest, 2012).
16 Jordan, *Ideology and Royal Power*, no. IV, 209–17; Richard, *Saint Louis*, ed. Lloyd, 74–5; Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 376–99; Labande, 'Quelques traits de caractère du roi Saint Louis'.
17 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, 156.
18 S. L. Field, *Isabelle of France: Capetian Sanctity and Franciscan Identity in Thirteenth-Century France* (Nôtre Dame, 2006).

19 Joinville, *Life of Saint Louis*, trans. Smith, 145; Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 584–94; Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, 180.
20 Jordan, *Men at the Center*, esp. 101–9.
21 Translated from Salimbene, *Chronica*, ed. F. Bernini, i (Bari, 1942), 317; C. Petit-Dutaillis, 'Saint Louis', *Cambridge Medieval History*, vii (1932), 331–61, esp. 331.
22 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, 156, 180.
23 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, 108–9, 326–7; J. M. Elukin, 'Warrior or Saint? Louis IX's character, and the challenge of the Crusade', in K. L. Jansen, G. Geltner and A. E. Lester, eds, *Center and Periphery: Studies on Power in the Medieval World in Honor of William Chester Jordan* (Leiden, 2013), 182–94.
24 Joinville, *Life of Saint Louis*, trans. Smith, 157.
25 Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 514–8.
26 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, 317–18.
27 C. Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, ed. F. L. Cheyette, trans. S. R. Huston (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, 1991), esp. 44.
28 L. F. Field, trans., *The Sanctity of Louis IX: Early Lives of Saint Louis by Geoffrey of Beaulieu and William of Chartres* (Ithaca and London, 2014), 77, 87–90, 145–6; Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 620–2; Le Pogam, ed., *Saint Louis*, catalogue no. 30, at 203, 211; nos 14–16, at 202–4.
29 Jordan, *Men at the Center*, 101–9; Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles*, 29–30.
30 Field, *Sanctity of Louis IX*, 110–11.
31 Joinville, *Life of Saint Louis*, trans. Smith, 303–4; Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, 106–7.
32 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*; Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gollrad, 576–84; U. Vones-Liebenstein, 'Une femme gardienne du royaume? Régentes en temps de guerre (France-Castille, xiiie siècle)', in P. Contamine and O. Guyotjeannin, eds, *La guerre, la violence et les gens an moyen âge, II. Guerre et gens* (Paris, 1996), 9–22.
33 For useful context see M. Howell, 'Royal women of England and France in the mid-thirteenth century: a gendered perspective', in B. Weiler and I. Rowlands, eds, *England and Europe in the Reign of Henry III (1216–1272)* (Aldershot, 2002), 163–81.
34 Joinville, *Life of Saint Louis*, trans. Smith, 163–4, 172.
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6

THE LAST CAPETIANS, 1270–1328

The apogee of royal power

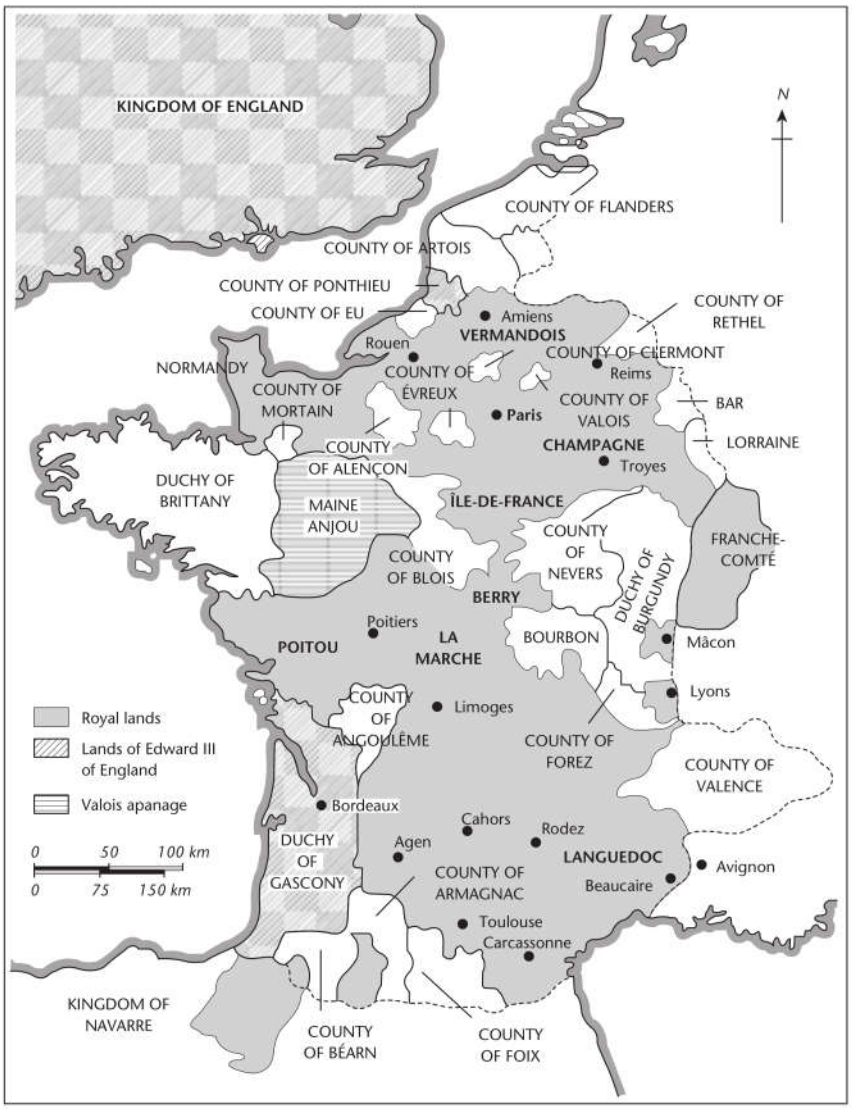
Introduction

Royal power under the last Capetians

In 1259 the extent of Louis IX's royal lands gave him a pre-eminent position in the French kingdom: he had held and consolidated the conquests of his predecessors and had increased royal power to formidable proportions (Map 5.3, p. 277). By 1328 even more of the kingdom was held directly by the king and administered by his servants, and much of the rest was held as apanages by members of the royal house. Furthermore, most of the remaining independent principalities had been brought closely under royal influence, and those rulers who put up strong resistance to Capetian authority – such as the count of Flanders and the English king, also duke of Gascony – had had to fight long and hard to preserve the independence of their lands. With the German kings weakened and the papacy under French control, France reached its medieval apogee under the last Capetians.

The competence of the king himself had widened too. Like Robert the Pious in the year 1000 Philip IV was in 1300 responsible for meting out justice, for defending his realm as sovereign and as suzerain and, as God's anointed, for the protection and support of the church. But where Robert and his itinerant court had settled a limited range of judicial matters largely concerning the men of the royal principality and surrounding areas, under Philip a great variety of cases from across the kingdom came to the royal judicial court, the *parlement* at Paris, and were dealt with by professional justices. The king's judicial ordinances were in many cases effective throughout the realm.

Robert the Pious had had some difficulty in defending the royal principality, but Philip IV could call on all his vassals and their vassals for military service, and on some occasions levied taxes throughout the French kingdom for its protection.



MAP 6.1 France in 1328

His feudal and sovereign powers were, whilst sometimes opposed, only rarely denied altogether, where those of Robert the Pious, while widely accepted in theory, had often been disregarded in practice. Similar coronation ceremonies had been used in 996 and in 1285, and both kings had a special sacral role. Yet in Robert's reign the French church had been forced to fend for itself, from which the peace and truce of God had grown, whereas in contrast Philip the Fair controlled it with an iron grip and was powerful enough to humble the papacy.

Of course, Philip IV and his sons were very far from being omnicompetent; they provoked much opposition, and they were unable to carry out many of the policies they wished to implement. Nevertheless, royal power was a vastly more impressive and sophisticated affair in 1300 than in 1100. The French kingdom, long celebrated for its learning and culture, and now with a royal cult that was more than a match for Edward the Confessor in England, if not for Charlemagne in Germany, overshadowed the other states of western Europe.[1]

The kings and their reigns

Philip III, 1270–85

Philip III had the historical misfortune to rule France between two of its most celebrated kings, Louis IX and Philip IV, and posterity has not been kind to him.[2] Born in 1245, he was the second surviving son of Louis IX and Margaret of Provence. A somewhat colourless figure, he did not share many of the qualities of his father, but he was not a complete nonentity either: the nickname Philip 'the Bold' was won perhaps during his lifetime, certainly before 1300, and was an acknowledgement of his rash valour in Tunis and in Spain. Physically strong and handsome,[3] he was noted for his penchant for hunting and tournaments, and for a taste for luxury that Joinville found displeasing. This contrasted with the simplicity of Louis IX's later years.

Philip shared his father's generosity in almsgiving; indeed there are some hints that he was utterly indiscriminate in his largesse. He was also firmly and conventionally pious, and led a quiet private life. Chroniclers reproach him for being a near-illiterate, however, and he was also easily dominated and influenced, as was demonstrated in the oath of obedience he took to his mother, the fiery Margaret of Provence, when a young man (p. 278). Despite his penchant for warfare, he was far less ready to act in government and administration, which he left almost entirely to his advisers.

Because of Philip's political weakness the French court soon became the centre of intrigue. At its heart was Peter of la Broce, a man from the lesser nobility of Touraine who had risen in the royal service and had been a chamberlain to Louis IX. He was Philip III's favourite, and one chronicler asserts that he 'attended the royal council at any hour he chose, and when the barons had given the king their wise counsel, it was rejected if he disagreed with it'.[4] He became inordinately wealthy and proud, and was hated and feared by many of the court.

In 1274, however, the king, whose first wife Isabella of Aragon had died on crusade, married again. The new queen, Mary of Brabant, an intelligent, cultivated, lively and attractive woman descended directly from Charlemagne, soon began to influence him strongly, and she and her family and supporters formed a group at court that was opposed to the power of Peter of la Broce. When Louis, Philip's eldest son (with Isabella of Aragon) and heir, died in 1276, Peter's followers made veiled allegations of foul play, pointing out that this death was in the Brabançon interest.

Philip, it is said, was more inclined to put it down to sorcery. The queen's faction managed to repay Peter early in 1277, when the king's cousin Robert II of Artois, sent as an envoy to Castile, pretended he had seen some French secret information there, revealed by Peter. The king entirely lost faith in his favourite as a result, and Peter was arrested and hanged without trial in 1278.

Mary now dominated Philip for the rest of the reign, although factional dissent continued amongst the many powerful personalities surrounding the king. Charles of Anjou, king of Sicily, had exercised a strong influence over Louis IX. Now, in alliance with Mary, he strove to maintain his power under the new régime. Louis IX's widow, Margaret of Provence, was Charles's longstanding and implacable enemy and plotted consistently against him (p. 281). To complicate the picture further Robert II of Artois, adventurer, supporter of Angevin power in Sicily, garden designer extraordinaire – his celebrated park at Hesdin was a medieval Versailles – was an adherent of Mary.[5]

Day-to-day administration seems to have been conducted by Matthew of Vendôme, abbot of Saint-Denis; a group of greater officials such as Peter Barbet and Henry of Vézelay, guardians of the seal; and the lesser administrators from northern and central France such as the Villebéon, Chambly and Machaut families who had served Louis IX. Driven by a zeal for royal rights and a relentless quest for resources, the king's household, finances and legal processes continued to function and develop under their own momentum apparently without any direction from Philip III himself.

Returning from the crusade in Tunis, the new king arrived back in Paris in 1271 to find a number of difficulties awaiting him. The most pressing was to determine who should take the lands of Alfonso of Poitiers and his wife, Joan of Toulouse, both of whom had died on their way home from the crusade, leaving no direct heir. By the treaty of Paris of 1259 Henry III of England should now have taken back Alfonso's lands of Quercy, Saintonge and Agenais (p. 333–334), but Philip's envoys fobbed him off with excuses.

Joan had made a will leaving her Toulouse lands to Charles of Anjou and to her cousin, Philippa of Lomagna. But these provinces, like Poitou, were seized by the royal officials, and they all put up surprisingly little resistance. The king's legal hold on Alfonso's and Joan's inheritance was finally secured in 1284 when the claims of Charles of Anjou and Philippa were disallowed, and Louis VIII's will was deemed to have had a reversion clause implicit in all the apanage grants.

Edward I, on his way home from Palestine, paid homage to Philip III in 1273 for his French lands that was conditional on the observance of the treaty of Paris of 1259. A compromise on this vexed issue was found in 1279 at the treaty of Amiens, when Edward was granted the Agenais and his wife Eleanor of Castile was allowed to succeed to Ponthieu, the right to which she had just inherited. In 1280 Edward traded rights over churches and towns in the region in return for the overlordship of Quercy and Saintonge.

In 1272 Richard of Cornwall, the claimant to the empire of longest standing, died, and Charles of Anjou, seeing his nephew Philip III as a potential ally

who would favour his schemes in Italy, put him forward as a suitable candidate. Pope Gregory X evidently did not agree, and Rudolf of Habsburg was elected as emperor. Nevertheless, in 1273–4 the French king handed over to the pope the Comtat Venaissin, a county to the north of Provence and east of Avignon, claimed by the papacy since the Albigensian crusade. In 1274 Philip met Gregory and confirmed the cession of this land, as well as discussing the crusade that the pope proposed to lead. Nothing came of this, and in 1276 Gregory died.[6]

A betrothal took place in 1275 which was to bring significant new territory under royal domination. In 1274 Henry III, king of Navarre and count of Champagne, died, leaving his three-year-old daughter Joan as his heiress. She was already promised to one of the sons of Edward I of England, but since her mother and guardian Blanche of Artois put herself under the protection of her brother Robert II of Artois, at the French court, Philip III was able to influence events. He betrothed Joan to his second son Philip, later Philip IV.

By the treaty of Orléans (1275), Navarre was put under the control of Eustace of Beaumarchais, seneschal of Toulouse, who marched in at the head of an army and began to reorganise the kingdom, much to the fury of its inhabitants. The other part of Joan's spectacular inheritance, the county of Champagne, was administered by Edmund, earl of Lancaster, second husband of Blanche of Artois, until Joan married Philip IV in 1284. Its people put up little resistance to the change of authority. Navarre, on the other hand, broke out in open revolt in 1276, but a French army was at hand to crush this rising with great cruelty, since the king had meanwhile gone to the defence of his Castillian relatives.

The son and heir of Alfonso X of Castile, Prince Ferdinand, died in 1275, leaving a widow, Blanche of France, Philip III's sister, and two sons later known as the *infantes* (children) of La Cerda. Alfonso passed Ferdinand the elder of these over as his heir, choosing his brother, Sancho, instead. According to William of Nangis, Blanche was left destitute and sent back to the French court.[7]

In defence of his sister, in 1276 Philip III sent an army into both Navarre and Castile, but the expedition proved disastrous. Despite the subjugation of Navarre by part of the army, the main force only got as far as Sauveterre near Pau before being ordered to return home again by the king. This was a great humiliation, explained away by a Saint-Denis chronicler as a result of the treachery of the king's advisers, and clearly reflecting incompetent administration and faction fighting at court. The *infantes* took refuge at Barcelona, but Alfonso X and his new heir Sancho soon fell out, neutralizing the problem for France from Castile.

Yet the Iberian Peninsula remained of crucial significance: in the final years of the reign Philip actively supported the boundless ambitions of Charles of Anjou, drawing the French kingdom into a disastrous crusade against Aragon. Charles's beleaguered Sicilian subjects rose against him in 1282 in the revolt known as the Sicilian Vespers. They offered the throne of Sicily to Peter III of Aragon, husband of the Hohenstaufen heiress Constance. Charles, who still controlled the kingdom of Naples, was given full support by Pope Martin IV, who as Cardinal Simon of Brie had been an associate of his.

On Martin's election in 1281 a violent war had broken out in the papal states; this Philip III had helped to put down with men and money. Now the pope excommunicated the Aragonese king, and offered his crown to Philip for one of his sons. After much deliberation Philip accepted it on behalf of Charles of Valois, but only on condition that the pope financed the war and had it preached as a crusade. Major preparations were made, and although the principal instigators of the policy, Charles of Anjou and Martin IV, both died in 1285, by this time it was too late to stop the Aragonese crusade.[8] This patent abuse of crusading elicited much hostility within parts of the French kingdom: the townsfolk of Lille attacked the Dominicans who were preaching it and were fined £4,000 *parisis* for their pains. The cost of the campaign was immense (pp. 397–398), and left the French monarchy heavily encumbered with debts that were to prove difficult to recoup.

Worse, this was for the realm of France an almost total failure. Headed by the king, its great army crossed the Pyrenees and with the support of James king of Majorca, brother of the Aragonese king and count of Roussillon, besieged and captured the town of Gerona. But stricken with sickness, it was further weakened when its supply lines were cut at the sea battle of Las Formiguas. The king, too, fell ill, and with a severely depleted force struggled back over the mountains, leaving a garrison at Gerona that was to capitulate before long. Philip III died at Perpignan, under a cloud of failure and defeat. The lesson of this campaign was not lost on his son, Philip IV, who turned away from expensive expeditions to the south in support of papal policy and began to concentrate on problems nearer at hand, and on the interests of the French monarchy.

Philip IV 'the Fair', 1285–1314

During Philip IV's critical and dramatic reign, royal power in France arguably reached its medieval apogee.[9] The historian is well-served with evidence about this pivotal time, since royal records were kept far more systematically than earlier on, and far more of them survive, as do a great number of other different kinds of sources. Yet despite such a wealth of evidence, Philip IV, central to the action, has remained an enigmatic and controversial king, in terms both of his character and in the extent to which he controlled and directed his administrators. This in large measure stems from the king's own withdrawn and aloof behaviour.

Born in 1267 or 1268, the second son of Philip III and Isabella of Aragon, he inherited the good looks of many of his family: tall, golden-blond and handsome, hence his nickname of Philip the Fair. While it was generally agreed that he had an elevated view of his office, contemporaries were unsure what to make of him. Bernard Saisset, bishop of Pamiers, declared: 'the king is like an owl, the most beautiful of birds, but worth nothing. He is the most handsome of men but he stares fixedly in silence . . . He is neither man nor beast, he is a statue'.[10] Hostile writers of the time pointed to Philip's silence as a sign of lack of interest in government and administration, and Geoffrey of Paris blamed him for an obsession with hunting and for allowing himself to be duped by his counsellors who were in control of his affairs.

By contrast Ivo of Saint-Denis, a eulogist of the king, described him in terms that would not have put Louis IX to shame. He was very pious, and almost too gentle and modest.[11] He was said to have been a devoted husband to Queen Joan of Navarre, a consort who fully met contemporary expectations of queenship, complementing her husband's powers, nurturing the realm and founding monasteries.[12] Her death in 1305 he deeply mourned, thereafter leading a celibate life. William of Nogaret, his leading adviser from 1303 to 1313, portrayed Philip as 'full of grace, charity, piety and mercy, always following truth and justice, never a detraction in his mouth, fervent in the faith, religious in his life, building basilicas and engaging in works of piety'.[13]

Administrative records confirm some elements of each view, by showing that early in his reign the king devoted much time to hunting, but that after 1305 he engaged increasingly in large-scale works of piety.[14] These included the foundation of monasteries, pilgrimages and substantial charitable donations, and taken with his increasingly ascetic lifestyle seem to reflect his increasing concern with the health of his soul and with making amends for the wrongs he had done.[15] The king also showed great devotion to the cult of his grandfather, Saint Louis, to whom several of his monasteries were dedicated and who was a pattern for his donations. This cult was of the greatest political importance (pp. 388–392). Saint Louis was the symbol of the French monarchy at its apogee, of holy kingship and royal power combined.

Modern scholarship stresses that Philip's belief in Capetian kingship was paramount and sees the king as a moralistic, self-righteous individual who equated his own causes, those of France, with those of God. Subject to bouts of self-doubt and vacillation, he was it seems a mistrustful, withdrawn, humourless, stubborn character, conventionally pious and chaste in his personal life. At times aggressive, at times indecisive, he was consistently obsessed with the dignity of his office and the righteousness of his cause.[16] A man of rigid moral certainties, ambitious and impatient for rapid results, he was ruthless in his dealings with opponents of his régime and its moral and ideological underpinnings.[17]

Although he was always reserved and not often in the limelight, there seems little doubt that Philip IV bore the ultimate responsibility for the policies carried out in his name, and that overall he controlled and directed his counsellors in a far more active way than his father had done.[18] He was not dominated by one favourite; he chose and directed his own servants and was loyal to them. However, royal records demonstrate that the extent of his involvement with the processes of government fluctuated: whilst he was normally present when major decisions were made, he often left the details and the execution of policies to his principal advisers, hiding behind them and portraying them as responsible when expedient.

In 1285 the lands of the crown overshadowed the remaining principalities and apanages. Philip's marriage to Joan of Navarre brought him the kingdom of Navarre and the counties of Champagne, Brie and Bar; the latter were eventually united with the royal domain. The reversion of several apanages also swelled the royal lands, and when new apanage grants were made to royal sons these were smaller by far than the earlier ones (pp. 401–402).

The royal princes continued to play an important role at court and in supporting the king's policies. Charles of Valois, Philip's brother,[19] followed in the footsteps of Charles of Anjou, and indulged in schemes to build up his power in southern Europe and in intrigues at court. Other dominant figures around Philip were the queen, and the king's principal advisers, Peter Flotte (*c.*1295–1302), William of Nogaret (1302–13) and Enguerran of Marigny (1313–14).

These counsellors are generally thought to have played a significant role in shaping the king's thought. After the death of Queen Joan in 1305, Philip became an ever-more zealous defender of God and the Catholic church in line with his own views of revealed truth: anyone who opposed this was countering the will of God and must suffer the harshest penalty. Flotte and Nogaret worked largely behind the scenes, but the more ostentatious Marigny was blamed for the highly unpopular activities of the last years of the reign.[20]

With the assistance of these counsellors, the king broke away from many of the policies of his predecessors. His continuing and ever-increasing need for money to fund his ruinously expensive wars against Gascony and Flanders prompted many novel financial expedients, including raising new forms of taxation and the debasement of the currency (p. 400). In 1306, he suddenly expelled some 100,000 Jews from right across the realm, stripping them of their money, goods and rights, and eliciting much opposition from nobles and lords who viewed this as a major attack on their own authority over these communities.[21]

On his accession, a pressing problem confronting the king was the Aragonese affair. His mother, Isabella, Philip III's first wife, had been an Aragonese princess, and the young king seems to have opposed his father's crusade. Certainly, he was anxious to make peace with his cousin Alfonso III, the new king of Aragon, as soon as possible, despite the claims of Charles of Valois. Negotiations were complicated by the Sicilian succession, and a settlement was not reached until 1291. Charles of Valois agreed to relinquish his claims to Aragon, but was given the hand of Margaret, daughter of Charles of Naples, the heir of Charles of Anjou: her dowry was to be Anjou and Maine, and Charles of Naples was to get Sicily back.

But the rights of the actual holder of Sicily, James of Aragon, were ignored. Soon after the arrangement had been made Alfonso of Aragon died and James became king here too, and showed great hostility towards the French. In 1295, he was induced to give up Sicily, however, and the peace of Anagni was made. The Sicilians next refused to agree to this settlement, and chose Frederick of Aragon, James's brother, as their king. Philip IV took no further action here, nor did he intervene in Castile on behalf of Blanche of France and the *infantes* of La Cerda. He needed to keep the goodwill of the Spanish kingdoms lest they should support the English in Gascony.

War broke out in Sicily when Charles of Naples tried to regain the throne from Frederick of Aragon. Pope Boniface VIII was as hostile to the Aragonese as his predecessors, and he preached a crusade and called in the French, a traditional way of dealing with papal enemies in Italy. Philip IV refused to help, but Charles of Valois was ready to embark on southern adventures. His first wife died in 1299

and he soon remarried. His new consort, Catherine Courtenay, had strong claims to the eastern empire, and Charles evidently regarded southern Italy as a suitable staging-point for this. Charles mounted an expedition, but it was not a success, and in 1302 his army was called back to France. Philip IV had him put forward as Holy Roman Emperor in 1308, and was to do the same for his son, Philip of Poitiers, in 1313, but neither attempt bore any fruit.

From the 1290s Philip IV's government focussed primarily on the French kingdom itself, being more heavily preoccupied with the subjugation of the two hostile principalities of Flanders and greater Gascony than with ambitious and expensive southern schemes. The king's wars within his kingdom were to prove costly and were to necessitate a number of financial expedients on the part of the crown that had momentous long-term consequences.

Early in Philip's reign France and England were at peace, as they had been for more than three decades, and Edward I paid homage for Gascony. The problems created by the treaty of Paris in 1259 – not least over English rights in Quercy, Agenais and Saintonge – had still not fully been resolved, and resentment bubbled under the surface. In 1293 the seamen of Bayonne, La Rochelle and the Cinque Ports were involved in a series of mutual raids and reprisals, and Philip summoned Edward I before the court of peers. The English king attempted to be pacific. He sent his brother to negotiate and agreed to hand over certain castles in Gascony to the French for 40 days whilst the whole question was investigated. This was a standard procedure, but Philip's men showed bad faith and refused to hand them back. In 1294 Edward withdrew his homage and prepared to fight.

Led by Ralph of Nesle, constable of France, by Charles of Valois and by Robert II of Artois, the French forces over-ran Ponthieu and captured much of Gascony, including Bordeaux. In this success they were helped by the Scots, who attacked Edward from the north in 1295 and became allies of the French king in the same year. However, Edward built up a coalition of princes of which the kingpin was Guy of Dampierre, count of Flanders. He had been angered by the attempts of Philip IV to levy financial aid from Flanders for the war against England and by Philip's currency manipulations and controls on the export of money, which threatened crucial Flemish trade with England; the king had taken into his own hands five of the principal Flemish towns when Guy resisted.

Furthermore, the French king had forbidden the marriage of the young Philippa of Flanders and the future Edward II. This action, rather than subjugating Guy, made him more hostile. By the time Edward I arrived in Flanders in 1297, however, Guy had already been defeated by Robert II of Artois at the battle of Furnes. Their German ally, the imperial claimant Adolf of Nassau, did not materialise and, taking refuge in Ghent, they made a truce with Philip IV.

A full peace between France and England was not made until 1303 after protracted negotiations; and it marked a return to the status quo of early 1294. In 1298–9, on the urging of Pope Boniface VIII, the marriages of Edward I to Margaret of France, Philip IV's sister, and the future Edward II to Isabella of France, Philip IV's daughter, were arranged. The latter, which took place in 1308, was to have momentous political consequences in England and in France. For the rest of

Philip's reign, the tensions between the two kingdoms remained unresolved, but open warfare was not to break out again until 1324 (p. 371).

The Flemish were quite a different matter. In 1300 Guy of Dampierre, deserted by all his allies, submitted to Philip and was put in prison. Flanders was administered by Jacques of Châtillon; the king toured the land and was well received by the population. Within a year, however, the turbulent and independent burgesses of many of the large towns had fallen out with their domineering French governors, and in May 1302 there was a massacre of the French at Bruges.[22] This rising, the so-called Matins of Bruges, is often compared with the Sicilian Vespers (p. 358), and it certainly had equally important results.

The whole of western Flanders was soon up in arms and the French royal army was sent to crush the rebels. Considered the finest fighting force in Europe at the time, it suffered total defeat by the Flemish urban militia at the battle of Courtrai in July 1302. The Flemish withstood the French cavalry charges with massed pikes, and dug pits and used archers against them. They lost only a few hundred men, but the French lost 1,000 knights, including Robert II of Artois and Peter Flotte.[23] Their humiliation, too, was intense, and for the court this was a grave political setback. The French view was that the flower of their chivalry had been defeated by a handful of unarmed rustics. Despite Philip V's military reorganisation in 1317 (p. 396), the French continued to rely on cavalry charges in the opening stages of the Hundred Years War, whilst the English, who had learned their lesson in Scotland, used and profited from the newer tactics.

A truce was made between France and Flanders in 1303 and Guy of Dampierre, the count, was released from prison in an attempt to calm the uprising. This was not successful and in 1304 the French mounted another massive campaign by land and sea. They won a partial victory at Mons-en-Pévèle. This the king attributed to the assistance of the Virgin Mary, for whom he held a particular devotion, granting the cathedral of Notre-Dame endowments for an anniversary prayer in its commemoration, along with a wooden equestrian statue of himself in triumph, to adorn the nave.[24] Following the death of Guy of Dampierre the Flemish were now induced to negotiate under the leadership of their new count, Robert of Béthune.

The terms seemed highly unsatisfactory to the Flemish: Robert was to succeed to his father's fief and to do homage to the French king, but was to pay a substantial war indemnity, levied from all those who had opposed the French; the king was to hold the castellanies of Lille, Douai, Béthune, Cassel and Courtrai; the city walls of Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, Lille and Douai were to be razed; and 3,000 men from Bruges were to go on pilgrimage to expiate the sin of the Matins of Bruges.

The towns of Flanders refused to ratify the treaty and would only agree to do so in 1309 after considerable modifications had been made to it. Then the indemnity proved very difficult to collect, and resentment between the king, the count and the towns grew. In 1312 Count Robert was threatened by the king with the confiscation of his lands, but he managed to make peace, and handed over to the French in permanence the castellanies of Lille, Douai and Béthune. Trouble boiled up again in 1314 and the French sent an army to Flanders, which achieved nothing.

The subsidy demanded to finance it sparked off a number of disputes. The problem of Flanders, as that of England, was passed on to Philip's sons.

Philip and his advisers are perhaps most notorious for their dealings with the church, producing scandals that horrified many contemporaries and later commentators alike. In the name of the grandson of Louis IX the traditional alliance of the French king and the papacy was broken, the Roman pontiffs brought closely under French control, and a major religious order suppressed.

In 1296 Philip and his counsellors fell out with Pope Boniface VIII over the issue of clerical taxation, and after a bitter quarrel the French king established his right to tax the French clergy. Another dispute broke out in 1301 when Boniface refused to remove from office Bernard Saisset, bishop of Pamiers, whom Philip accused of inciting the Languedoc to rebellion. Boniface issued bull after bull reiterating papal sovereignty, but the tables were entirely turned when in 1303 William of Nogaret and a group of his French followers broke into the papal palace at Anagni and sacked it. Boniface died soon afterwards (p. 417), and the pontificate of Clement V (1305–14) marked the beginning of the papal residence at Avignon and the domination of the papacy by the French king.

The strength of royal power was further demonstrated by the suppression of the Templars, forced on the pope by the French. The process began in 1308 when Nogaret began to carry out enquiries about the estates and the persons of the French Templars, and the pope was pressured into dissolving the whole order in 1312. Such developments were possible only because Louis IX had built up and consolidated the already well-established alliance of the French king and the church, and a prelude to them was his canonisation in 1297. But the activities of Philip IV's advisers, performed at his command, and aimed above all to buttress royal power, went far beyond the norms of his grandfather. They transformed the relations between the French king and the church, and arguably gave the papacy a shock from which it did not recover until the Counter-Reformation.

The apogee of Philip's reign came in June 1313, at a magnificent ceremony in Paris when the king knighted his three sons and he and his court took crusading vows (Source 6.1). In attendance was Edward II of England with his wife Isabella, Philip's daughter. Weakened by troubles at home, Edward paid homage to Philip for his French lands.[25]

SOURCE 6.1 MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION DEPICTING PHILIP IV AND HIS FAMILY, 1313

This miniature is from a magnificent manuscript containing moral tales for princes which was presented to Philip IV during the great Pentecost ceremonies in Paris in 1313, marking the apogee of his reign. Created by imaginative physician Raymond of Béziers, initially as a commission by Queen Joan of Navarre, it is a translation of the Spanish text of the book of Kalila and Dimna, a primer for rulers derived from Indian and Persian fables in which animals

are the key protagonists. Raymond embellished the text with illuminations to mark the occasion of its presentation, adding six further miniatures depicting the main ceremonial events and glorifying the French king. One of these was a depiction of Peter of Latilly, royal chancellor and Raymond's patron, handing the book to the king in Raymond's presence.

Shown here is Raymond's frontispiece, an image of Philip IV and his family which provides a useful *tour d'horizon* of the last Capetians, while signifying that these were people of great power and status. From left to right, they are Charles, later Charles IV; Philip, later Philip V; Isabella, queen of England, wearing her crown; Philip IV, crowned and on his throne, raised above them; Louis, the king's heir, later Louis X and also crowned as he was already king of Navarre by inheritance from his mother; and Charles of Valois, brother of the king and father of the future Philip VI.[26]

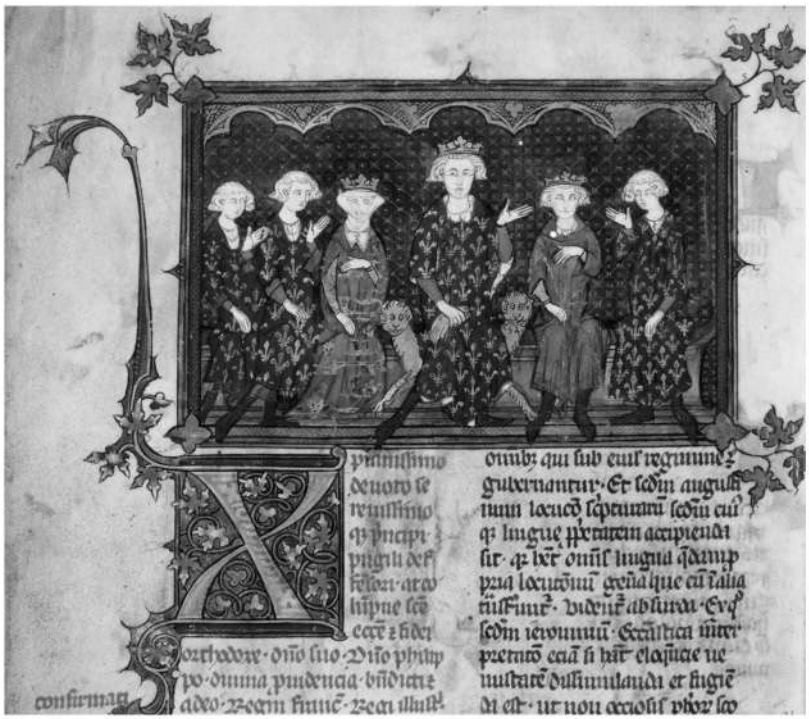


IMAGE 6.1 Philip IV and his family, 1313

BN MS Latin 8504, ff. bv–lv

Philip's reign ended with a number of troubles, however. The cost of the 1314 war with Flanders proved excessive and, despite the consent to a subsidy given by an assembly at Paris, the cohesion between the crown and the higher nobility began to crumble as leagues were formed in the principalities to protest against

royal taxation and encroaching administration. Philip agreed to cancel the Flemish subsidy shortly before his death, and Louis X settled most of the protests by issuing charters of liberty in 1315.

Philip's last year also saw a scandal at court that was exaggerated and romanticised by Alexandre Dumas into the legend of the Tour de Nesle.[27] We know that in 1314 the king arrested Margaret of Burgundy, wife of the future Louis X, at that time king of Navarre; Blanche of Burgundy, wife of Charles, count of La Marche, later Charles IV; and Joan of Burgundy, the wife of Philip, count of Poitiers, later Philip V. Margaret and Blanche were accused of conducting adulterous liaisons with two brothers, Philip and Walter of Aulnay, knights of the royal household. Joan knew about these, it was said, but her crime was that of silence. The two knights were flayed alive and burned to death, and the three women imprisoned and shamed. Although Joan, supported by her husband Philip, was later cleared and released, Margaret was to die in prison in 1315 and Blanche, her marriage annulled, in the abbey of Maubuisson in 1326.

The charges against these three Burgundian princesses, probably trumped up and highly exaggerated, embodied the powerful and unsettling association of adultery with political intrigue as popularised in contemporary literary fiction; and playing to Philip's austere and moralistic world view, the scandal provided him with ready scapegoats for his political woes. Moreover, none of the three women had produced male heirs, only daughters, in itself a reason for the brutal rejection of several earlier Capetian consorts.

Who brought the accusations against them? Enguerran of Marigny, serial plotter and arch-manipulator, is a strong candidate, and the subsequent rehabilitation of Joan coincided with his downfall. Yet several contemporary chroniclers had no doubt but that it was Isabella, known to posterity as 'the she-wolf' of France, sister-in-law to all of them, and wife of Edward II of England. She was once more in France in 1314, on an informal diplomatic mission to her father Philip IV on English rights in greater Gascony.[28] Very far from conforming to the submissive mould expected of contemporary queens, Isabella was to have a spectacular influence in English politics, in 1327 leading a faction which would depose her husband in favour of her son. In 1314 she had a motive beyond pure jealousy: she had shortly before produced this same son, the future Edward III of England, and discrediting the wives to the three heirs to the French throne might have improved his chances of succession in France.

There is however no hard evidence for Isabella's involvement in the scandal; and nor could it be foreseen that all of Isabella's brothers would die without male heirs. Nevertheless, a strong element of doubt was now attached to the legitimacy of Joan of Navarre, daughter of Louis X and Margaret of Burgundy, which may well have been instrumental in later denying her the throne. Resulting developments in the succession law also, perhaps ironically, cut out Isabella's son Edward III. This sordid scandal provided a dramatic end to an extraordinary reign.

According to Ivo of Saint-Denis and William Baldrich, the king, deeply troubled by all these events, died an extremely pious death, guaranteeing his salvation

and the transfer of power to his son.[29] On his deathbed Philip is said to have instructed his heir, Louis X, to show respect for the church, to govern in the traditions of Saint Louis, and not to be as avaricious as he himself had been. So lavish were the provisions of his will, including the grant of £4,000 *tournois* to the Celestine hermits (who had been oppressed by Boniface VIII) and bequests of enormous sums to compensate for the wrongs he had done, that his successor was forced to disregard many of them – in the name of needs of state.[30]

Louis X (1314–16), Philip V (1316–22) and Charles IV (1322–8)

Philip IV was succeeded by his three sons in turn. All of them were described by the chroniclers as tall, handsome, generous and pious, and all are shadowy figures. Louis X,[31] son of Philip IV and Joan of Navarre, who reigned for 20 months, was given the nickname '*le Hutin*', the quarrelsome or stubborn. He is however often seen as belying these qualities, as a weak and ineffectual figure: John of Saint-Victor described him as childlike, credulous, ill-prepared for rulership and heavily dominated by his uncle, Charles of Valois, and his followers.[32] This faction, the *parlement* party, persuaded the king to have Enguerran of Marigny tried for treason and condemned to death, and his execution came about not as a result of his dishonest deals but because of the malice and hatred of Charles of Valois. Louis, indeed, felt some remorse, and was to remember Enguerran's wife and family in his will. Other advisers of Philip IV also suffered: Raoul of Presles was tortured and Peter of Latilly imprisoned.

These events seem not to have resulted from pressure from the provincial leagues, although they doubtless assisted the king in his dealings with them. Throughout 1315 Louis X negotiated with the leagues and ceded them charters of liberties, quelling disorder and substantial opposition to the crown (Source 6.2). For this he deserves credit. The lack of concerted resistance to the crown from the kingdom as a whole, the strength of local interests and the narrow objectives of the lesser nobles, leaders of the leagues, enabled general promises to be made without compromising the crown's interests too far.

SOURCE 6.2 GREAT SEAL OF LOUIS X, 1315

Kept by the chancellor on the king's behalf, the great seal was used to authenticate the most formal grants by the crown, such as endowments to religious houses or the charters of liberties to the leagues. By the early fourteenth century chancery practices were considerably more sophisticated than under the early Capetians (pp. 111–113). The Carolingian diploma had almost disappeared, replaced by letters patent which were formally recorded in royal registers. The parchment originals were validated by seals made from green

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wax, each attached to its document by a green and red silk tag. Less formal royal grants were made through writs or *mandements*. In the king's absence the royal administration in Paris could however validate instruments on his behalf, through the substitute or Châtelet seal, and from the twelfth century onwards a privy or personal seal was often used by the king for immediate business when distant from Paris. In addition, Louis X's brother and successor Philip V is known to have used his sign manual – his handwritten signature – in correspondence with Pope John XXII.

This image of the great seal of Louis X, used in 1316, is taken from an early-nineteenth-century engraving by the eminent palaeographer Natalis de Wailly. The Latin inscription encircling the king announces 'Louis by the Grace of God king of France and Navarre'. The king, depicted as a lawgiver, sits on a throne ornamented with lions and wears a crown with three *fleurs de lys*, and holds a sceptre and a staff of justice. The reverse (not shown) is a counter-seal – an additional imprint to validate the seal against forgery. At its centre is a shield decorated with *fleurs de lys* surrounded with the heraldic carbuncle of Navarre with eight radiating spokes, within a polylobe.[33]

IMAGE 6.2 Great Seal of Louis X, 1315

From N. de Wailly, *Eléments de Paléographie*, ii (Paris, 1838), planche F, no. 2

By 1316 all the provinces save Artois had settled down again. As early as 1315, the king was able to demand another subsidy for the next war against Flanders. This was needed because Count Robert had promised the king homage but failed to render it, and the court of peers pronounced his lands confiscated. The campaign proved an unmitigated disaster, however. The weather was a pivotal factor: the summer in this year was exceptionally bad, with long periods of cold and torrential rain, and much of Flanders was flooded, whilst the rest became a quagmire that threatened to engulf the French forces and forced them to turn back.

Louis X's short reign saw also the recall of the Jews to France, in 1315. Made under highly onerous conditions which would benefit the crown, this move caused serious consternation amongst the populace in many places, and there were attacks on the returning refugees.[34] The backdrop was a sustained period of failing harvests and major social and economic instability. In response, a royal ordinance allowed all the serfs in the royal domain to purchase their liberty, perhaps also an attempt to rally popular support at a time of crisis.

The king died of a fever in June 1316. His second wife, Clemence of Hungary, was pregnant, and in November gave birth to a son, John I, who lived and reigned for five days. France had been ruled by a council of 24 barons, then by the king's brother Philip of Poitiers as regent. On the death of the infant king, Philip set aside the rights of Joan, Louis X's daughter with his disgraced first wife Margaret of Burgundy, and took the throne for himself as Philip V.[35] Critical to this power grab was the support of many major magnates including Charles of Valois and the powerful apanaged countess of Artois (and dowager of the county of Burgundy in the Empire: p. 401), Mahaut, peer of France and the mother of his wife Joan of Burgundy.[36] They can be seen as exercising their right to choose the king, as peers of France (pp. 82, 157).

The legality of Philip's action was however highly questionable. Male-preference primogeniture had long been applied to the great baronies of France, and after 987 had become the accepted way of transmitting the crown through each king's successive male heir, bolstered until 1180 with associative kingship. This pattern of succession was supported by most contemporary inheritance laws – Roman law, canon law and the customary laws of Paris – and gave Joan, the young daughter of Louis X, a very strong claim to the throne.[37] But although her uncle, Odo IV duke of Burgundy, appealed to *parlement* on her behalf and tried to rally some of the leagues behind her, she was unable to inherit the crown of France. She was compensated with a substantial pension and a promise that Champagne would revert to her if Philip V died without male heirs. In addition, she was to marry Philip of Évreux, whilst Odo IV duke of Burgundy took Philip V's daughter, also called Joan, as his wife.

In February 1317, a month after Philip V's coronation, a general assembly of clergy, nobles, citizens and academics at Paris gave retrospective endorsement to his accession and set out the general principle that a woman could not succeed to the French throne. This, buttressed by similar decisions in 1322 and 1328, would in the reign of Charles V (1364–80) be elaborated into the *lex Salica* or Salic law,

based supposedly on the inheritance rules of the Salian Franks, and cutting women out of the succession.[38]

All this was intended to undermine the claims of Edward III of England to the throne of France, which were founded on the perfectly respectable legal principle that the right to the throne could be transmitted via a woman, if of a senior line. This new reality would moreover cut across the notion of the return of the French kingdom to the race of Charlemagne, linking the Capetians and the Carolingians through the female line (p. 203). That – the *reditus* – would henceforth be played down under France's Valois rulers.[39]

King Philip V's great height gave him the nickname '*le Long*', the tall. Described by contemporaries as handsome, cultured, kind and affable, a father to his people, he conformed to contemporary norms of French kingship by his stance as an unyielding upholder of Christian orthodoxy and his expressed commitment to crusading. Strongly supporting the work of the inquisition in the Languedoc and an exponent of retributive justice, he meted out the harshest penalties to lawbreakers.

A far stronger, decisive and more effective ruler than either of his brothers, during his five-year reign Philip brought a measure of stability to the kingdom as well as developing the royal administration. Distancing himself from Louis X's politics, he took advice from a loyal group of the great men of the realm as well as lesser nobles. He rehabilitated his father's advisers, Peter of Latilly and Raoul of Presles, restoring their lands and possessions, and he honoured the memory of Enguerran of Marigny. He overhauled the machinery of government without provoking opposition, re-organised the army and developed schemes for a uniform coinage and weights and measures.[40] Yet there were strong signs of economic and social instability, and in 1321 the king's attempts to raise a subsidy in peacetime to finance reform produced a strong reaction against his régime.

Relations with the principalities needed strengthening and repairing. By a mixture of diplomacy and force Philip finally pacified the league in Artois, and came to terms with the troublesome Robert (III), claimant to the county. The king made spasmodic interventions in Flanders, whose count, Robert, still refused him homage, and in 1319 mounted another fruitless campaign there, but in 1320 he came to terms with Robert, who agreed that Louis of Crécy, eldest son of his heir, Louis of Nevers, should marry the king's daughter Margaret, and that he would render the king homage. However, the years from 1323 to 1328 saw a major and violent rebellion by Flemish burgesses and peasants against comital and royal oppression, crushed eventually by the royal army.

The king managed also to obtain homage from Edward II for Gascony, by proxy in 1319, in person in 1320. While remaining aloof from the complexities of Italian politics, he supported the interests of Pope John XXII, who in turn offered him much advice and support, along with substantial financial support in the form of tithes. But in 1322 Philip V suffered a wasting illness. On his deathbed, the relic of the crown of thorns at his side, he cancelled all taxes, as his father had done.

Philip V's brother Charles IV,[41] formerly count of La Marche, now succeeded him, again cutting out the claims of female relations. Known as Charles the Fair in France and as Charles the Bald to his reluctant Navarrese subjects, he had proved a turbulent and unruly subject of Philip V. An aggressive king, he denounced his brother's administrators and during his six-year reign was to return to the policies and advisers of Louis X. With his much-hated treasurer Peter Rémi he presided over major manipulations of the currency which contributed to significant political and economic instability. In 1322, he also once more expelled the Jews from France.

The future succession remained a problem, as Charles had no male heir. In 1322 he repudiated his first wife, Blanche of Burgundy, not on the grounds of the adultery for which she had been imprisoned, but for spiritual affinity, since Blanche's mother, Mahaut of Artois, was Charles's godmother. In the hope of fathering a son he wed Mary of Luxembourg, daughter of the late Emperor Henry VII, but she died in 1324, and he then married Joan of Évreux. Neither of these unions would furnish him with a surviving male child.

Charles's union with Mary brought him a claim to the imperial crown, which he craved. In 1324 a dispute between Pope John XXII and Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV of Bavaria over lands and rights, resulting in Louis's excommunication, appeared to offer an opening. Charles expended much effort and money on his suit: when the electors failed to choose him, he tried to bribe his rival to withdraw. But nothing was to come of it.[42]

In 1322 Louis of Nevers succeeded to the county of Flanders, and was immediately confronted with an uprising of the burgesses of Bruges and its surrounding districts. Charles went to his rescue in 1325 but could do very little, and matters were only patched up, but not finally resolved, at the peace of Arques in 1326. Charles's successor Philip VI (1328–50) inherited the problem of subduing what a contemporary described as a rude and brutal nation.[43]

Nor was any settlement made with England over Gascony. In 1324 war broke out over the judicial rights to the *bastide* of Saint-Sardos in the Agenais, Gascony was again declared forfeit, and Charles of Valois invaded the duchy. Isabella, queen of England, was instrumental in making peace in 1325, and had her young son Edward invested as duke of Gascony and count of Ponthieu, although Charles of Valois (who died in 1325) refused to relinquish the Agenais, which he had captured and retained as an indemnity. The deposition of Edward II by Isabella and her lover Roger Mortimer left her and Edward III in a weak position; and this was reflected in the terms of the treaty of Paris of 1327. Philip of Valois kept many of the lands that his father had taken, and the English were left with a diminished duchy of Gascony. They had also to pay a substantial indemnity for the war. This was a triumph for Charles IV, but a humiliation which the English were not to forget.

When Charles IV died in 1328, his queen, Joan, was pregnant. This baby turned out to be a girl, and in conformity with recently-established precedents the throne passed to Philip of Valois, grandson of Philip III in the male line, whom Charles had

designated as regent and who became King Philip VI. A cadet branch of the family thus replaced the direct Capetian line on the throne of France. It was not long before the English began to claim the French crown for their own king (pp. 433–434).

The French economy and society

Economic and social conditions: the first signs of crisis

In the late-Capetian era, French society still remained relatively settled and prosperous, with patterns of agricultural production and local and long-distance trade continuing much as they had during the reign of Louis IX (p. 283). From about 1300 onwards the details of rural life are far better documented than in earlier periods. Studies of matters such as demographic trends and fluctuations in crop yields that have been made possible by the wider range of sources throw into relief the differences between the various parts of the French kingdom. From at least the fourteenth century until the eighteenth there was a particularly pronounced economic contrast between the lowland areas of northern and central France and the more far-flung and highland regions.

In areas such as the Île-de-France and Picardy, corn- and wine-producing areas, methods of cultivation were relatively advanced, crop yields were high, and society was comparatively affluent. By contrast subsistence farming and stock-raising were more commonly found in regions such as the Massif Central and the Languedoc, making peasant communities far less prosperous overall. This contrast was to be of great significance in the future economic and political development of the French kingdom.

During the fourteenth century economic stability was gradually undermined by a series of crises. Climatic changes resulted in cooler and wetter conditions that exacerbated the problems already created by overpopulation and the overexpansion of the land area under cultivation. The long and large-scale wars with England brought with them disproportionately heavy financial demands, devastation and economic disturbances which caused further troubles.

By 1350 famines, the disruptions of war and the Black Death had all taken a heavy toll, and had produced rural depopulation in many areas and a decrease in the proportion of land farmed. Agricultural techniques and farming practices did not adapt to cope with food shortages. Grain prices fluctuated wildly but fell in the long term, and whilst wages paid to unskilled labourers slowly increased, landowners living from the exploitation of their estates suffered considerably. This was a time of pronounced social and economic instability.[44] These crises and changes did not achieve full momentum until the 1330s and 1340s, but in the first three decades of the fourteenth century in Northern France there was a clear foretaste of the wider problems to come. In 1305 food was short in Paris; in 1309 there was general dearth of grain, and in 1314 another bad harvest afflicted the Île-de-France.[45]

Climatic conditions were intemperate in the extreme in 1315. There was a summer of freezing cold and torrential rain, which affected the whole of north-west

Europe; but Flanders seems to have suffered more than anywhere else. Parts of the coastal area were under deep floods and the royal army, mounting its invasion, became completely bogged down in the mud and had to retreat.

The harvest in most of France then failed altogether, and there was a widespread famine that lasted until 1317, exacerbated by a hard winter.

Prices for wheat reached unprecedented levels (a measure normally worth 10–15 shillings fetching 60 or as much as 80 shillings) and starvation was accompanied by disease, crime and even cannibalism. The church organised processions and prayers. A chronicler wrote that

> we saw a large number of people, gathered from near and far, barefoot, and many, apart from the women, entirely naked. They came with their priests in procession to the place of the holy martyr [Saint-Denis], devoutly carrying bodies of the saints and other relics to be adored.[46]

In 1318 there were signs of recovery, but these events still had a profound and lasting psychological impact. In 1320 a great band of *pastoureaux*, poor men and fanatics, roamed the land, marching on Paris. Declaring themselves to be crusaders, they released prisoners and massacred Jews. They moved south into southern France and Aragon, where the violence was more frenzied, with massacres and forced baptisms of Jews. The pope hurled anathemas against them, and harsh reprisals were needed to restore order. At Narbonne many were captured and hanged, while the rest dispersed. The next year there was a massacre of lepers in response to a rumour that they had been enlisted by the Muslims of Granada to poison wells, to avenge the Christian reconquest in Spain.[47]

This growing social instability was accompanied by fluctuating prices; and for that, much of the blame must be laid at the door of Philip the Fair's administration, for their currency manipulations disrupted economic conditions and raised living costs, whilst diminishing the value of fixed incomes. These measures made international trade less secure, as did Philip's attempts to wage economic warfare against the papacy and the rulers of England and Flanders, who retaliated in turn. There were considerable international repercussions, for the value of French debts owed to foreign bankers fell, causing great resentment, particularly in Italy.

In such conditions trade could be carried out in France only under royal licence, and the export of foodstuffs was forbidden in 1302, 1304–5 and 1314. It became ever-more difficult to provision Paris's great population and in 1307 the king regulated the price of corn here, and issued an ordinance temporarily to fix wages and conditions of trade in the capital. In an age of growing crisis, the idea of Louis IX's reign as a golden age became increasingly compelling.

The population of France in 1328

In 1328, shortly after the accession of Philip VI, royal *enquêteurs* carried out a survey of the parishes and hearths of the *bailliages* and *sénéschausées* in the royal domain,

to determine the extent of royal rights in the levying of hearth tax. They seem to have worked with considerable care, as is shown by a rare survival, an original return for the *sénéschausée* of Rouergue. The returns were collected and correlated by officials at the *chambre des comptes* into a document known as the *État des paroisses et des feux*, which was then copied, not always entirely accurately, into royal registers and used for future reference.

Some principalities and lordships – Brittany, Gascony, Flanders, Blois and Barrois – were omitted, as were the apanages of Artois, Alençon, Évreux, Bourbon, La Marche and Angoumois-Mortain. A few lordships within the areas covered by the *bailliages* also do not appear, but it is striking that the great majority do, implying that the crown's authority was sufficiently strong to levy hearth tax from them. Lot, in his classic 1929 study of the document, suggested that the extent of the coverage is the manifestation of a prestigious monarchy, strong enough to have important demographic exercises carried out in the whole kingdom, with the exception of four or five great fiefs and the apanages.[48] Despite its errors and omissions, the list is invaluable as a survey of the domain. Historians have also drawn on it to provide statistical data on the population of France in 1328.[49] Yet, intended as a checklist for taxation purposes, not as a census return, it must be used to emulate the latter only with considerable care.

In the *État des paroisses* two basic pieces of information are given for each *bailliage* or its equivalent: the number of parishes, and the number of hearths in each. On the basis of that, it is possible to calculate household densities for various regions. For example, Poitou, with an area of over 15,000 square kilometres, contained some 112,000 hearths or households, but the Paris basin, a third of its size, had about 117,000 hearths, making it the most densely populated region of France.[50]

To then convert hearths into numbers of people, multipliers of as high as 5 or even more and as low as 3.5 have been proposed. Lot chose the former figure for use in his calculations, and added extra hearths to cover the missing areas. He thereby arrived at a total of between 17½ and 19 million for the rural population of France, with an additional figure of between a tenth and a fifth for the townspeople, bringing the grand total to between 19 and 22 million.[51] Some later historians believed that this estimate was far too high, both on the grounds of broadly comparable estimates of England's population – a mere 3 million – and of inconsistencies in the *État des paroisses* itself. For Dollinger, at 210,000 people Paris's population was particularly overstated as the result of a misreading: a more probable total would he thought be 80,000.[52]

Later studies, however, supported Lot's conclusions. On the population of Paris, for example, there is strong evidence that in 1250 the city had already had some 160,000 inhabitants (p. 285). On that basis, the total for 1328 – of 61,098 hearths and 210,000 people – is not unrealistic. Moreover, the cartulary of Notre-Dame, undated but roughly contemporary with the *État des paroisses*, gives a figure of some 50,000 hearths in the French capital, providing further corroboration.[53]

Paris in 1328 was, then, not only very densely populated but also, in terms of the size of its population, an exceptional city. It had perhaps twice as many

inhabitants as the great Italian cities of Milan, Genoa, Naples, Palermo, Florence and Venice, and thrice as many as London. Within France it was clearly substantially larger as well as considerably wealthier than Reims and Châlons, for whereas they were assessed by the royal tax collectors for around £10,000 *parisis* each, Paris had to pay ten times as much.[54]

More generally, most historical demographers now support Lot's belief that France's population in 1328, supported by improvements in agricultural techniques, totalled 20 million or more, an exceptional and quite unprecedented size. Critics of his thesis had extrapolated their lower figures from work on areas of lower population. Indeed, contemporaries recognised that France's population had grown exceptionally high: papal bulls of 1317 and 1318 creating the new dioceses of Toulouse and Perigueux refer to the need to minister to an increasing population. Moreover an inquest taken at Fenouillèdes, near Corbières, in 1306, which counted people as well as hearths, shows that here five people per hearth was the norm – supporting Lot's multiplier. Awareness that the population levels were unusually high may well have been a factor in the taking of the survey in 1328.[55]

Yet this level of population density was fragile. Already in the early years of the fourteenth century bad weather and crop failures had resulted in mass starvation in the northern parts of France. By 1430 the combined effects of political upheavals and prolonged periods of warfare, the Black Death, social malaise and famine would reduce the population of France by at least 50 per cent, Paris itself contracting to around 100,000 people.[56]

Paris, royal capital

In the first half of the fourteenth century Paris, with its huge population, continued to dominate France and northern Europe through its commerce, art, culture, learning and religious and political life. Although still itinerant, the king often stayed here for several weeks at a time, especially for important political occasions.[57] His palaces were expanded and extended, and members of the royal and princely houses, the bishops and abbots created grand residences nearby, such as the Hôtel de Cluny, first constructed for the abbot in the 1330s, or the princely palace of Louis, count and later duke of Bourbon, built near the Louvre after 1303. Royal administrators and leading merchants too required imposing houses and possessions to match.

Paris was pre-eminent for luxury goods created to serve a discerning market. There were 251 goldsmiths here in 1300, some, such as Peter of Mantes and Simon of Lille, serving the king himself. Embroiderers created magnificent robes for court occasions, and leading artists gathered here to create illuminated manuscripts, amongst them Honorius of Amiens, from whom Philip IV commissioned several luxurious service books. Perhaps most celebrated of all was John Pucelle, whose work included a much-admired book of hours created in about 1325 for Joan of Évreux, wife of Charles IV.[58]

The university of Paris continued to flourish, its leading masters of philosophy and theology drawing masters and students from across France and Europe to its schools. By 1274 Thomas Aquinas completed his magisterial *Summa Theologica*; and the study of natural philosophy flourished despite bans issued by the church in 1270 and 1277 against many of the central tenets of its Aristotelian adherents. More than 30 new colleges sprang up to house the students, such as the Collège de Navarre, founded by Queen Joan in 1305 and expanded in 1315. Philip IV's royal predecessors had supported the university of Paris both for its prestige and to keep order in the city, but Philip IV became its active patron. In 1285, shortly after his accession, he affirmed its clerical privileges and gave it full royal support. While continuing to uphold its rights against the provosts and bailiffs of Paris, from 1297 he sought in return to enlist its support in his conflicts with the papacy.[59]

Economic activity on a huge scale was required to sustain this sophisticated and complex market. Surviving tallage registers from the reign of Philip IV demonstrate that wealth was concentrated on the *Ile de la Cité* and the right bank, close to the Louvre and the Palais Royale, with smaller artisan activities taking place on the left bank, around the Sorbonne, with its large population of students. Areas where the poor lived were largely clustered to the north of the city around the parish of Saint-Nicholas-des-Champs.[60] Until the expulsion of the Jews from France in 1306, around 1,500 lived in the capital, their numbers increased in the 1290s by exiles from Anjou, Gascony and England. Forced to wear the *rouelle* (p. 298), they were increasingly impoverished and beleaguered.[61]

Although the king and his household remained itinerant,[62] the administrative departments retained and expanded their headquarters in the king's headquarters, the Palais Royale: from 1318, for example, the chancellor was allotted a permanent office near to the Sainte-Chapelle. Philip IV oversaw a major building programme, from 1294 extending his palace to accommodate his burgeoning administration and courts, to provide additional space for the canons serving the Sainte-Chapelle, and to remodel his privy lodgings in considerable style, including sophisticated walled gardens. With its new walls and towers designed to impress rather than defend, this was a grand political, religious and administrative hub for the kingdom.

Highly revealing of his attitude to his kingly role, its design followed not just royal models, but ecclesiastical buildings too. The centrepiece was the vast and magnificent *Grand'Salle*, now lost, but located originally above the still-surviving *conciègerie* (Source 6.3). Designed as a setting for the king to transact royal business – from a huge table of black marble imported from Germany – and to stage public appearances, its double-aisled upper level was decorated with imposing and lifelike statues of Philip's Merovingian, Carolingian and Capetian ancestors attributed to Evrard of Orléans. These highlighted the dynastic continuity and the role of the later Capetians as bulwarks of church and papacy. Its grand entrance, comparable with a church door, embodied the religion of kingship. This was to be adorned with statues of Philip IV at the centre, flanked by his eldest son Louis and, until his downfall, by Enguerran of Marigny, whose hand may be discerned in the designs.[63]

SOURCE 6.3 ENGRAVING OF THE *GRAND'SALLE* AT THE PALAIS ROYALE, PARIS, MADE C.1580

This important engraving of *c.*1580 by the influential designer and assiduous recorder of royal buildings, Jacques I Androuet du Cerceau, depicts the now-lost *Grand'Salle* at the Palais Royal in Paris, constructed for Philip IV. With its double naves supported on eight massive columns topped with wooden vaults, this was intended to impress, dwarfing even the vast Romanesque Westminster Hall in London. A sequence of polychrome statues of the French kings adorned it, highlighting the dynastic continuity between the Capetians, Carolingians and Merovingians. Although lost after a fire of 1618, the statues were recorded by antiquaries, and a near-contemporary description by John of Jandun praised their lifelike quality. As part of his own magnificent reconstruction of Westminster Hall in the late fourteenth century, Richard II of England would commission a similar set of statues of English monarchs.[64]

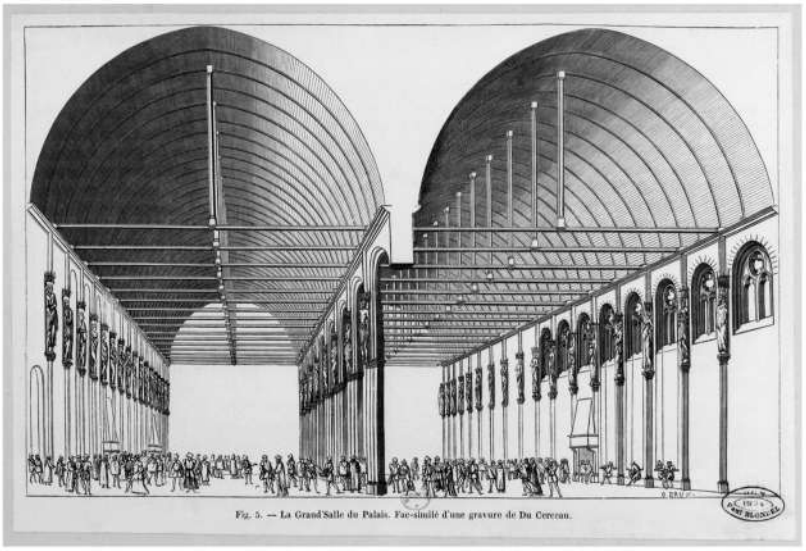

IMAGE 6.3 Engraving of the *Grand'Salle* at the Palais Royale, Paris, made *c.*1580

BN, Estampes et Photographie,VA-225F-FOL

If the Grand Palais was Philip's royal headquarters, embodying the king's sovereign role, the Louvre was his great castle, symbol of his suzerain powers. At once a fortification protecting Paris, a residence, a treasury and a prison, it hosted the great set-piece occasions of state. For Paris in the later Capetian period was the scene of many lavish and magnificent royal ceremonials.[65] To mark the coronation of Mary of Brabant, second queen of Philip III, in 1275, the barons and bishops

of France gathered in the capital for a sumptuous week-long jubilee, celebrated by the burgesses in grand and solemn style.

The great celebrations of 1313, lasting for eight days, were seen by contemporaries as the greatest feast ever held in the kingdom of France. Philip IV's three sons were knighted, and the king and nobles took crusading vows. With religious ceremonies and glittering banquets for the élites, and theatrical and musical events for the people of Paris in its lavishly decorated streets, this was curated and controlled by the king as the ultimate manifestation of royal power: it was the zenith of his reign.

The celebrations began with the ceremonial entry into the city of Philip's daughter, Isabella of France, and her husband King Edward II of England, on Saturday 2 June 1313. The king showered them with gifts and expensive foodstuffs and his advisors lent the hard-pressed English king substantial sums of money to sustain him in suitable state. The next day, Pentecost, saw the ceremony of the knighting of 200 young men, including the king's sons, at Notre-Dame, the king bestowing them with many gifts including horses valued at more than £32,000 *parisis*.

Other highlights of the days that followed included the solemnities associated with the taking of the cross at Notre-Dame on Wednesday, a huge procession of Parisians from Notre-Dame to the Grand Palais on the Thursday and then on to pay tribute to Edward and Isabella at the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and then a three-day street festival, with tableaux, some on biblical themes, some magical – and some satirical. The king emerged with much-strengthened prestige, improved relations with his English vassal, and a role as the premier crusader in Christendom. The ceremonies opened up for him also the opportunity to levy a feudal aid for the knighting of his sons, and a crusading tithe. And Paris (*Parisius*) had it was said been transformed into a veritable paradise (*Paradisius*).

In 1323 John of Jandun, an arts master at the university of Paris, wrote a glowing tract lauding all aspects of the capital from its architecture to its bread: its ideal environment, he opined, created the perfect ruler in the shape of the king.[66] But behind this glittering façade the agents of the crown and city continued to run a highly repressive régime, as in the reign of Louis IX, exacting harsh reprisals against lawbreakers and those who opposed the orthodoxies of church and state (p. 287). Criers announced proclamations of the king and the municipal authority on matters ranging from trade regulations to moral conduct, patrols on horseback enforcing compliance. Amidst the hubbub of commercial life and church bells summoning the faithful to prayer could be heard the screams of prisoners in the Châtelet prison suffering torture, amputation or branding for their transgressions, their humiliation a demonstration of royal power.

This was an age when public spectacles such as drawing (the public humiliation of the guilty) hanging, flaying, boiling alive or the slow burning of heretics or Jews, deployed cruelty both as exemplary deterrence and to evoke a righteous satisfaction in the onlookers. Increasingly, hangings took place at the *fourches*, towers topped by a grid of stone pillars with wooden beams between them, sited in prominent places. Such was the gibbet of Monfaucon to the north of the city, where executions took place and corpses were displayed *en masse* for months and sometimes years as a grisly warning.[67]

Yet there was succour as well as oppression: king and church continued to give alms to the poor – perhaps as many as 10 per cent of the populace – and to fund hospitals for the sick and lepers. Thirty-two parish churches served the spiritual needs of the populace and almost as many religious houses of all kinds interceded for their souls. Many feast days of saints saw their relics, such as those of Saint Geneviève, patron saint of Paris, taken in solemn procession around the city, uniting many parishes in prayer.[68]

Presiding over the city's spiritual life was the bishop of Paris. Work on the east end of his cathedral, Notre-Dame, with its magnificent flying buttresses, was completed (Image 6.5), and inside, to organise the ever-increasing flow of worshippers and pilgrims, a massive choir screen was constructed to demarcate the liturgical space. A still-surviving though much-restored cycle of sculptures adorned it, depicting the life of the Virgin Mary and Christ's appearances after the Resurrection, a message of hope for the population (Source 6.4).[69]

SOURCE 6.4 SCULPTURES FROM THE CHOIR SCREEN AT NOTRE-DAME-DE-PARIS, C. 1300–18

By the late thirteenth century Notre-Dame-de-Paris had become so packed with worshippers that a huge screen was constructed in the central part of the choir to separate from the supplicant throngs the liturgical space where

IMAGE 6.4 Sculptures from the choir screen at Notre-Dame-de-Paris, *c.*1300–18

Image © E. Hallam

(continued)

(continued)

the canons celebrated the divine offices. Built between about 1290 and 1350 under the architectural direction of first Peter of Chelles, then John Ravy and finally his nephew John Le Bouteiller, it was decorated with a remarkable and vivid cycle of sculptures representing the lives of the Virgin Mary and of Christ. Although a significant part of the cycle was lost in the eighteenth century, two substantial sections have survived; these were restored and repainted by Viollet-le-Duc in the nineteenth century. This depiction of the flight into Egypt is from the northern part of the screen, often attributed to the time of Peter of Chelles, between about 1300 and 1318. In a scene of great tenderness Joseph leads the donkey carrying Mary and the infant Jesus to safety.[70]

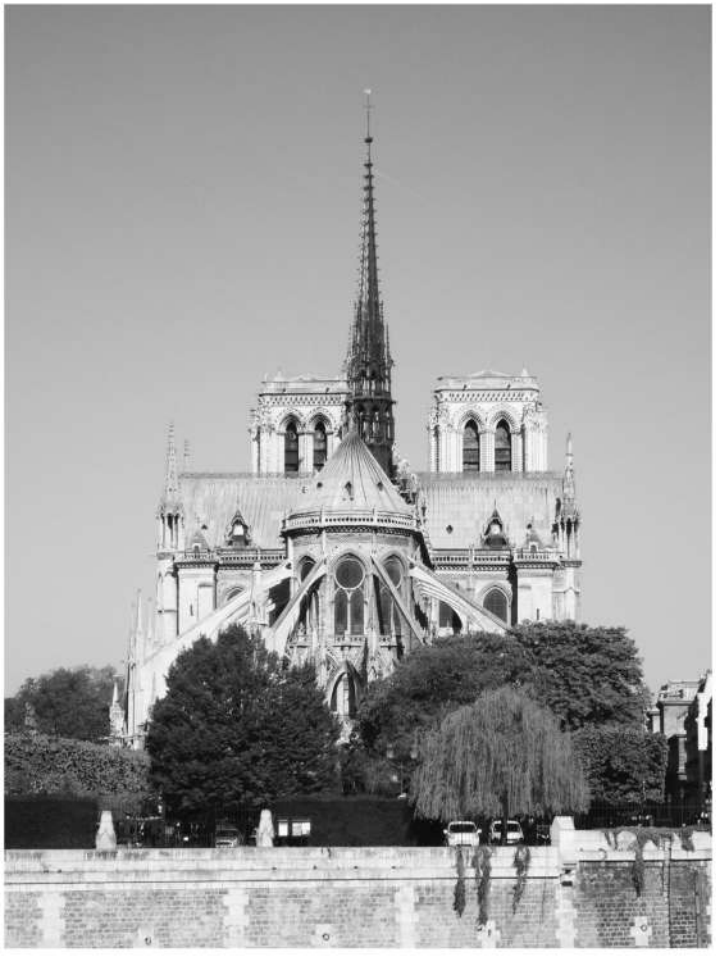

IMAGE 6.5 Notre-Dame-de-Paris, east end

Image © E. Hallam

Rural life: the Pyrenean village of Montaillou

Estate records and accounts, which for the late Capetian period survive in far greater numbers, tell us a great deal about the material condition of the peasants and how their lives were organised; archaeology and even rare surviving artefacts can provide insights into how they lived.[71] It has always been far more difficult to discern what they thought and believed. Because of this, the inquisition register for the Pyrenean village of Montaillou in the county of Foix, covering the years 1318 to 1325, that fortuitously survives in the Vatican Library, is a particularly valuable document. It was drawn up by the bishop of Pamiers, Jacques Fournier, later Pope Benedict XII, and the Dominican inquisitors of Pamiers, during their attempts to extirpate the Albigensian (or 'Cathar') heresy (pp. 187–188) from this village, its last stronghold in the French kingdom.[72]

The register gives a full record of the procedures and sentences against the heretics, whose depositions were translated from the Occitan tongue into Latin at a fairly late stage of its compilation. The quality of the translation is one challenge in interpreting the register, for we cannot know how carefully this was done. It may well be misleading to examine too precisely the way in which the peasants' evidence is expressed, and to draw too many conclusions from the nuances in what they are alleged to have said.

Furthermore, general theories about medieval peasant society cannot necessarily be extrapolated from Montaillou, which is atypical in many ways. The strength of the heresy in the community clearly coloured the outlook of its inhabitants to a marked degree, as did the propensity of the inquisitors to record what they were seeking to find. In his inquisitors' manual, Bernard Gui, historian, papal envoy and from 1307 to 1324 the chief inquisitor for the diocese of Toulouse and thus an overseer of the process, warns of the 'falsity, untruthfulness and malice' of the heretics and their 'foxlike cunning' which will cause them to conceal their errors. These he notes down in advance for the inquisitors to uncover.[73]

Bearing all the caveats in mind, however, the register provides remarkable evidence about the outlook and beliefs of the whole community. The classic study by Le Roi Ladurie, based on this source, brought the village vividly to life and has stimulated continuing interest in this isolated community. More recent scholarship has at once both questioned some of Ladurie's assumptions and built on his foundations.[74]

Montaillou was a small village, containing 200–250 inhabitants, almost all of them peasants: poor and isolated, it was probably unrepresentative even of Pyrenean mountain communities. Its people made their living from subsistence farming and sheep-raising. The landless peasants of the type who were often day-labourers in northern villages here generally tended to work as shepherds. One such was Peter Maury, the wandering shepherd with strong heretical beliefs but few possessions. Constantly on the move in the mountains, Peter and his fellows returned home only at intervals, enabling them to stay in contact with heretical groups across the Pyrenees.

Wandering heretical preachers also arrived at Montaillou from time to time, and were given a warm welcome in these households. This was a perilous endeavour. William Bélibaste, a heretical preacher, told Peter Maury that when he returned from the mountains:

> We felt both joy and fear. Joy, because it was a long time since we had seen you. Fear, because I was afraid lest the inquisition had captured you up there; if they had, they would have made you confess everything and come back among us as a spy in order to bring about my capture.[75]

A high proportion of the villagers were heretics, their loyalty to their *domus*, the community of their home, strengthening the influence of Cathar beliefs. One wealthy peasant family, the Clergues, dominated the community, exercising a mafia-like control. Bernard Clergue, the *bayle*, wielded considerable economic power; his brother Peter Clergue, as parish priest and a notorious womaniser, exercised much influence of other kinds. The brothers were adherents of the Cathar heresy, leading a group of some 11 households. Central to the investigations of the inquisition, they were ready to incriminate other villagers for their own advantage. An opposing faction, orthodox Catholics from a smaller group of some five families, were headed by Peter Azéma, with some households remaining neutral.

There was far less differentiation in personal wealth than would have been found in a village in the Paris basin, for example, or even in some larger Pyrenean villages. The villagers' resentment seems to have been directed against the Catholic church, not against the nobility. The impoverished noble *châtelaine*, Beatrice of Planissoles, held little more land than any of the other families and was very much part of the community. A heretic and widow, who had been a victim of sexual violence, she claimed to have been liberal with her favours throughout the village, and not to have regarded such actions as sinful.

Archaeological work on the castle on its crag, dominating the village, where Beatrice lived, showed that it had been heavily fortified in the mid-thirteenth century when it came under the control of the counts of Foix but that this had physically cut it off from the rest of the village. It was to this secure and commanding place that in 1308 the villagers, after their mass arrest at the behest of the inquisition, had been marshalled before some were taken to Carcassonne at the start of a long process of investigation that would culminate in 1318–25 with the work of the court at Pamiers.

Although highly rigorous in his inquisitorial methods, in his drive to save the souls of the people of Montaillou Jacques Fournier was it seems rather less coercive than many of his contemporaries. Torture was used as an exceptional measure, excommunication and strict confinement being the preferred method of extracting confessions. One convicted heretic from Montaillou, William Fort, was subjected to burning at the stake, while the penalties handed down to the others were imprisonment, the confiscation of their goods, or like Beatrice of Planissoles, being compelled to wear the yellow cross. This did not mark the end

IMAGE 6.6 Ruins of the castle keep at Montaillou, Ariège, Midi-Pyrénées

© Yann Gwilhoù, CC BY-SA 3.0

of the community though: whilst by the end of the fourteenth century its population had perhaps halved, the village and some of its families would survive into the modern era in their isolated mountain fastness.

The king and the social order

From Louis VI's reign onwards, the crown had granted charters of enfranchisement, and Louis IX had given numerous serfs their freedom. The later Capetians granted many such licences, and in 1315 an ordinance allowed all serfs in the royal domain to buy their freedom, and encouraged other lords to do likewise. This was an important step, and perhaps also an attempt to rally popular support at a time of crisis.

By contrast, from about 1300 the problems of the communes in running their affairs became increasingly pronounced, and a number gave up their charters of independence and submitted to the king. Financial difficulties were a major factor in this, as was the poor quality of government of many of these towns and villages. For example, a group of Corbie's citizens petitioned Louis X about the poor administration of the town by their mayor and officials, and Louis ordered an assembly to be summoned and a vote taken. A majority decided the commune should be abolished, and *parlement* pronounced its suppression in 1318. The commune of Compiègne and the village association of Bourbonne-Chantemerle were also wound up shortly afterwards, royal officials taking over their administration. The Hundred Years War was to speed up this process.[76]

The decline of the communes does not seem to reflect severe problems for the burgesses as a group. Some suffered badly from the financial expedients of Philip IV's reign and became bankrupt; but many others remained prosperous. The towns often supported the king's financial and military policies, and only a few joined the leagues in 1314–15. The backing of the burgesses for the king was of some political importance. The king had rights of *embourgeoisement*, the grant of burgess status; and these were used widely by the last Capetians, who often allowed the beneficiary to become a burgess of the king himself (*bourgeois du roi*) rather than being attached to a town. Thus, he was under royal protection, and did not have to reside in a specific community.

The king also accrued the right to ennoble men of non-noble birth. This was used only on a relatively small scale by the late Capetians, but was to be of great significance to their successors. By 1200 the nobility in many parts of France seems to have become a closed caste with a rigid set of rules and etiquette and defined legal privileges. By 1300 the fortunes of a substantial proportion of lesser nobles were in decline, and many took service with the king in the hope of reversing this.

The noble ethos remained a powerful one despite the difficulties experienced by many of its exponents, and a number of non-nobles in the royal administration sought a patent of nobility, so that they could be knighted and enjoy the status and privileges which went with this. Analysis of these grants[77] has shown that the earliest to survive is to Giles of Concevreux in 1285–90, the second to John of Taillefontaine in 1295. From 1307 to 1314 ten more were registered, but a number of others may have been lost, as was William of Nogaret's patent. Of the 12 surviving grants three went to men from northern France, nine to southerners. The northerners were royal administrators whose status was ambiguous and needed definition, the rest were satellites of Nogaret and his fellow royal adviser William of Plaisians who had helped to extend royal influence in the south.

Louis X made six grants on similar lines, but Philip V gave 45, ten of which went to members of the household from the north: burgesses, merchants and bankers who had made an important contribution in the royal service. The northern grants overturned far more social barriers than those to the southerners, for social distinctions between nobles and burgesses were far less clear in the Languedoc. Royal service had thus become a way of climbing the ladder to noble status, and this power of the king to ennoble his loyal servants was to be widely used in the future.

The nature of royal power

The extent of royal power

The last Capetian kings were, by most criteria, formidably powerful.[78] To contemporary rulers the France of Philip III and Philip IV was the dominant state in Europe, with wide political connections and great wealth. The papacy appeared increasingly to be dominated by the French king, and the church in France was

kept firmly under royal control. The royal lands, rather than forming only a small fraction of France as in the eleventh century (Map 3.1), stretched from north to south, virtually engulfing the remaining independent fiefs (Map 6.1).

The king's subjects were greatly affected by the growth of sovereign authority inside the kingdom. While bound by constraints such as the refusal of some of his subjects to co-operate over certain matters, the king's will was frequently imposed against concerted opposition. His feudal suzerainty was widely obeyed, and was resisted only by the most determined princes. He had a broadly based administrative system; and royal justice and the crown's ability to collect taxes extended throughout the kingdom. Royal courtiers and propagandists used both Roman law and Christian concepts to justify the actions of the king and to glorify the kingdom. The ideological foundations of the monarchy were hugely strengthened by the notion founded in Roman law that 'what pleases the prince has the force of law', a principle that would later underlie absolute monarchy. Chroniclers, particularly those writing at Saint-Denis and in close proximity to the court, promoted an image of kingship in both Latin and vernacular texts highly favourable to the Capetian kings.[79] It was a powerful image although, as Jones has argued, it was not one that won universal acceptance: writing in the mid-1290s, the Benedictine chronicler of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, Geoffrey of Courlon, whose work went on to shape perceptions of history in Sens in the first half of the fourteenth century, offers just one instance where Parisian propaganda fell on distinctly stony ground.[80]

In the aftermath of the canonisation of Louis IX in 1297, Philip IV was portrayed by many writers as a righteous ruler exercising God-given powers. Stress was laid on his personal piety and on the holiness of the French nation. William of Nogaret, for example, called France 'the principal pillar supporting the Roman church and the Catholic faith'. God had chosen and blessed it, and established it to last forever. William of Sauqueville, a Dominican writer, characterised the king as a type of Christ, glorifying king and kingdom together.[81] The complementary notion that opponents of royal power were opponents of God himself, and increasingly, heretics and sorcerers, was used to justify the harshest punishments for those who opposed the king's will.

In his *Recovery of the Holy Land* and the *Brief Summary* the provincial lawyer Peter Dubois took the notion of French greatness to yet further – albeit fantastical – heights, suggesting that the whole of Europe should be made subject to the king of France, since the French people, enjoying a particularly favourable astrological alignment, were inherently superior to all other races. Peter's ideas clearly interested the court, since some of his work was copied into a royal register, but they failed to get him the post in Paris that he sought, and it is a mistake to see them as official propaganda.[82]

As well as France's spiritual wholeness its territorial unity was stressed, as was its separation from and superiority over other nations. From about 1300, indeed, there was a strong vein of 'proto-national' sentiment in French, and particularly Parisian, writings. While older conceptions that placed their emphasis on a united Christendom, rather than a wholly independent French kingdom, survived in

regional centres such as Sens, Boniface VIII was portrayed as violently anti-French by royal propagandists, who accused him of declaring that no measures were too strong as long as he could destroy French power.[83]

The idea of France as a 'state' was deployed to justify the frequently-used argument that its king could call on all its inhabitants to defend it.[84] The schools of Paris provided theoretical support, most notably in works often attributed to Dominican John Quidort of Paris, a pupil of Thomas Aquinas. Inspired by Aristotle's newly rediscovered *Politics*, he put forward a reasoned justification for a political world of self-governing independent units, denying the papacy the right to intervene in secular affairs.[85]

Although even John appears to have been less radical than he has sometimes been portrayed, such arguments justified claims that the French king could raise military service or taxation in time of war for the public good. This notion was used also to justify currency manipulations, the prohibition of private wars and judicial duels, and the control of imports and exports. But although this idea was strongly held enough to allow the levying of heavy war subsidies it did not prove possible to extend it to cover the peacetime needs of France's rulers. As pressure mounted to raise funds from new sources, friars, poets and chroniclers issued increasingly dire warnings to the crown not to collect taxes that were burdensome or unjust, in line with the teachings of Saint Louis.

Perhaps as a result, but certainly for political reasons, in 1313 Philip IV stepped back from raising subsidies when a truce was made in his war on Flanders. In 1321 Philip V met with strong opposition to his plans to use taxation to finance administrative reform rather than fighting, and abandoned them. The idea of the needs of the defence of the realm was a valuable one, but was also limited in its long-term applications.[86]

Yet the later Capetian monarchy lost a great deal of the popularity built up by Louis IX and his predecessors. The king's counsellors generated widespread hostility. For example, the character and career of Enguerran of Marigny was later satirised in the *Roman de Fauvel*, a poem that took its final shape in 1318[87] (Source 6.5). The king himself was criticised by Geoffrey of Paris for his indolence and for allowing evil counsellors to dominate him, whilst Bernard Saisset, bishop of Pamiers, was alleged to have prophesied that Philip's reign, that of the tenth Capetian, would be the last. A later writer looked back on it as a time when the Jews, Templars and Christians were all thrown to the lions.

SOURCE 6.5 THE *ROMAN DE FAUVEL*, 1310–17

This lively illustration is from the most celebrated manuscript version of the *Roman de Fauvel*. A satirical poem excoriating sinfulness and vice in society, its original version was attributed to Gervais of Bus, chaplain to Enguerran of Marigny and a notary in chancery. The initial version took its final shape

IMAGE 6.7 Miniature from the *Roman de Fauvel*, 1310–17

BN MS Français 146, f. 34r

in 1314, the year of Marigny's death, but in 1318 a second and modified version appeared, illustrated here. Dedicated to the young king Philip V, it had been transformed into a diatribe against Marigny by Chaillou de Pestain, the pseudonym of perhaps another chancery clerk, Geoffrey Engelor.

(continued)

(continued)

The standpoint of the poem is that of the *parlement* party, faithful to the traditions of Louis IX, and while it clearly had little influence on its dedicatee, its text would be widely copied.

In the text, Marigny appears as the dun ass Fauvel, a personification of all the vices: the name is composed of the initials Flattery, Avarice, Villainy, Variability (Fickleness), Envy and Laxity. He marries Vainglory believing that she is Fortune, overturns the church, and subjugates the pope to the king. His adventures are accompanied by an important collection of music, sacred and profane, the 169 pieces developing the key themes of the morality tale. The story is further enhanced by a series of 78 coloured miniatures: this folio depicts a key moment. Fauvel is about to join Vainglory in the marital bed. The people, many masked, unite in a noisy and angry demonstration known as a *charivari*, shouting and beating their drums in protest – but to no avail.[88]

A hopeful poet addressed a piece to Louis X advising him to honour the church in the way his father had not done, but Philip IV's sons generated little more enthusiasm than he had. In the eleventh century the Capetian kings had often been criticised for being ineffectual; now their vastly increased power, and the ways in which they used it, produced considerable hostility and resistance. Philip's successors made some concessions, placing some limitations on their own authority but, in reality, gave away very little power. The later Capetian kings were not all-powerful, for the opposition to them from the regions of France could not be fully contained, but they do have a claim to being the nearest to 'absolute' rulers that their time could produce. But they were not able to defuse the tensions that were building up within French society, and which, exacerbated by war, famine and plague, were greatly to weaken the monarchy later in the fourteenth century.

The canonisation and the cult of Louis IX

In August 1297 Pope Boniface VIII canonised Louis IX and gave the French royal dynasty its own tutelary saint at last.[89] This was of enormous moment to Philip IV and to the French people. All the imagery of holy kingship could be used by Philip IV's counsellors in the struggle with the papacy to even greater effect than before, in the glorification and justification of his actions. The special relationship of the Capetians and the church had finally reached this high point, but this came at the very time when Philip was building up towards a bitter struggle with the vicar of Christ.

The auguries for Louis IX's canonisation were strong: miracles were reported at his tomb soon after his burial, he was widely revered for his Christian piety and

devotion, and he had the strong backing of his heirs and successors, Philip III and Philip IV and of his brother Charles of Anjou.[90] Yet it was 27 years before he was actually proclaimed a saint. In 1275 Pope Gregory X made initial efforts to this end by commissioning Cardinal Simon of Brie, papal legate and a friend and adviser of Louis, to take evidence about the sanctity of the late king. This was done not least in response to strong demands from the leading French ecclesiastics for his canonisation. In 1272 Gregory had also asked Louis's former confessor, Geoffrey of Beaulieu, to write a *Life* of the king. A hugely influential account focussing on the king's sanctity, this was complete probably by 1273. Shortly after this, fellow-Dominican William of Chartres produced a complementary work which brought out Louis's qualities as a just ruler and reported numerous miracles at his tomb in Saint-Denis.

But in 1276 Gregory died and, although inquiries continued under his successors, no major step forward was made until in 1281 Simon of Brie became pope as Martin IV. In 1282 a public inquiry was held at Saint-Denis, which produced a vast amount of evidence supporting Louis's qualifications for sainthood: piety, crusading virtues, just kingship. Although now lost, this material was later used by William of Saint-Pathus in his *Life*, written in 1302–3 at the behest of his patron Blanche, daughter of Louis IX and widow of Ferdinand of Castile. The witnesses appearing in Saint-Pathus's preface as the source of his testimonies were an august and ageing group; many had died long before the canonisation took place.[91]

Pope Martin's successors did little to progress the matter. In 1297 however Pope Boniface VIII agreed to reopen the case and to canonise Louis, although, given that the king had succumbed to disease rather than dying in a holy war, this would be as a confessor rather than a martyr of the church. Boniface had taken evidence during the enquiries and was clearly convinced of the merits of the case, but this was also very much a conciliatory gesture in the last stages of his first dispute with Philip IV, and was made under pressure from Peter Flotte.

In his bull of canonisation dated 11 August 1297 Boniface, drawing on contemporary formulations of good kingship, emphasised Louis's qualities as a just ruler who 'respected and honoured . . . the limits of justice without relinquishing the paths of equity'. As a zealous advocate of peace, said the pope, Louis supported and respected the liberties of the Church: this was by implication the very opposite of Philip IV.[92] Philip was however now able to use the cult for his own political purposes, deploying these very same qualities and citing him in his disputes with Boniface to justify his prerogative powers over the French church.

On 25 August 1298 the first celebrations of the new saint's feast day took place in Paris, and Louis's relics were placed on the altar at Saint-Denis. At the same time Philip drew increasingly on the memory of his grandfather in intensifying his sacral role as king, with the royal powers – including touching for scrofula – and the moral obligations which stemmed from it. Thus in 1299 he issued an ordinance which stated that he was following the norms of Saint Louis to promote virtue, abolish vice and assure the peace and tranquility of his subjects. Also a strong supporter of the cult, Philip's queen Joan of Navarre, countess of Champagne, in 1305

commissioned John, lord of Joinville, to produce his *Life of Saint Louis* (p. 248). This vivid and celebrated account, completed by 1309, has been hugely influential in shaping posterity's perceptions of the king.[93]

Philip IV's patterns of personal piety, too, reflected his identification with his grandfather's cult. Work on Saint-Louis at Poissy, a generously endowed convent for Dominican nuns, began soon after the canonisation in 1297. Philip had already spent £65,000 on the works by 1301, and engravings show it was a fine building in the best traditions of the *rayonnant* style, its plan based closely on that of Royaumont. Louis's heart was said to have been translated here, and after Philip's death his own heart was buried in this shrine to holy French monarchy. Three further monasteries followed it, directly modelled on those created by Louis: Royallieu, a house of Victorine canons situated at Neuville-aux-Bois (*c.*1303), and then in about 1308 a Carthusian priory, Mont-Saint-Louis, near Noyon and a house of Clares, Franciscan nuns, at Moncel.[94]

Keen to centre the cult in his palatine chapel, the Sainte-Chapelle, Philip first refurbished it, ensuring also that his grandfather would be suitably celebrated and memorialised in impressive liturgical offices.[95] Then, having obtained a papal bull from Clement V in 1306, the king removed Louis's skull, his principal relic, from Saint-Denis – to the great distress of the monks – in order to relocate it here. He commissioned a magnificent head-reliquary from Parisian goldsmith William Julien, staging a major and splendid feast to celebrate its arrival. It was to become the centrepiece of many later medieval processions in Paris, marking key events in the life of the French kingdom. Notre-Dame-de-Paris was awarded a rib, and as their consolation prize the monks of Saint-Denis retained the king's lower jaw and teeth, solemnly dedicated in the king's presence in 1307. Numerous fragments of bone were further distributed amongst the royal family, royal churches and institutions with a special connection with the saint[96] (Source 6.6).

SOURCE 6.6 RELIQUARY FOR A FINGER-BONE OF SAINT LOUIS, C. 1300

This beautiful and ornate silver gilt and crystal reliquary was created by Philip IV in about 1300 to house a finger-bone relic of his grandfather, Saint Louis, and is likely to have been one of a set donated by the king to royal churches in France and beyond, of which it is the sole survivor. In 1304 Philip dispatched a finger-reliquary of Saint Louis to the king of Norway; and perhaps at about the same time this casket was sent to the Dominican priory at Bologna in Italy, where Louis's cortège had rested on its way back to France, in recognition for the order's help. There it remains, a superb example of the work of the Parisian metalworkers of the age. Supporting the crystal casket containing the finger-bone of the saint, the two angels evoke the style of statues surviving from Philip's otherwise lost priory at Poissy, dedicated to his grandfather.[97]

IMAGE 6.8 Reliquary of Saint Louis of France, *c.*1300. Bologna, Church of San Domenico

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The cult of Saint Louis was primarily associated with royal and aristocratic centres in the Paris area, such as Saint-Denis and Notre-Dame. At Saint-Denis the monks, despite their setback with the relics, deployed the cult further to enhance the abbey's special role in supporting the Capetian monarchy. By 1304 a chapel with magnificent stained-glass windows depicting the life and miracles of the saint had been erected at the southeast corner of the chevet; and in 1306 Philip IV oversaw the rearrangement of the royal tombs at Saint-Denis to show the unbroken continuity in the line of kingship from Carolingians to Capetians, ensuring that his own tomb would in due course be placed next to Saint Louis.

The abbey's chroniclers played their part too. Prolific writer William of Nangis penned a narrative of the political events of Louis's reign before 1297, which stressed the king's devotion to Saint Denis and the abbey, drawing a strong contrast with a malevolent Frederick II, arch-enemy of the church.[98] The theme of Louis's devotion to the abbey was reflected too by Ivo of Saint-Denis in his 1317 account of Louis which was more hagiographical in nature; but Ivo emphasised also the unity and Christian heritage of the kingdom: France was a holy land, its inhabitants a chosen people and its rulers most Christian kings.[99]

Other religious orders celebrated the new royal saint, the Dominicans and Franciscans of Paris and the Cistercian order commissioning major and elaborate liturgical offices for him. The papal bull of canonisation had however enjoined all churches to honour Louis's feast day. Despite some outright hostility in Quercy, Agenais and Saintonge, rights in which had been ceded to the English under the Treaty of Paris (pp. 338–339), the cult was celebrated fairly widely across the northern part of the kingdom, particularly in the royal lands, and by the middling sorts of people as well as the élites.[100]

The Franciscan convent at Lourcine, founded in 1287, became one important centre. Its community of aristocratic nuns was brought to Paris and developed under the patronage of no less than three queens – Louis's widow Margaret of Provence, Mary of Brabant and Joan of Navarre. Later regarded as Louis's own foundation, it possessed some magnificent emblazoned robes used during his royal ceremonies. In contrast, a plain grey tunic worn by the king in his later years was preserved in a reliquary on its altar; and an important series of murals was painted on the walls evoking his crusades, his pious life and his foundation of churches. The originals are now lost but copies made in the seventeenth century provide an important insight into the king's zealous devotional practices (p. 292).[101]

Yet as the political consensus between crown and subjects broke down later in Philip IV's reign, Louis IX's reign was seen increasingly as a lost golden age, a contrast with contemporary political life. The memory of the saint was deployed against the crown, the baronial leaders of the leagues presenting Louis as the defender and supporter of good laws and local customs and as the standard of royal conduct and rulership. Thus in 1315 Louis X, in accommodating their demands, would cite Saint Louis as his exemplar. Moreover, in the 1340s Edward III of England would claim to be the true heir to Saint Louis and to his crown, promising to return the French kingdom to the laws and customs which were in place at the time of Louis IX, king of France.[102]

Court factions and politics

The later years of Louis IX's reign had witnessed struggles between the supporters of the queen, Margaret of Provence, and her English kinsfolk, and Charles of Anjou, Louis's ambitious brother (pp. 335–336). These hostilities continued after the king's death and were further magnified, so that the court of Philip III became a centre of intrigue matched perhaps only by that of Robert the Pious (pp. 88–89).

The king's favourite, Peter of la Broce, his queen, Mary of Brabant, and their followers engaged in a bitter dispute that terminated only in Peter's fall and execution. After this Mary and the ever-active Charles of Anjou persuaded the king to embark on the crusade against Aragon, with disastrous results.

Philip IV was, if elusive, a far more determined character than his father. He was prepared to listen to the advice of Queen Joan of Champagne, Charles of Valois and Robert and Mahaut of Artois, but he relied principally on his advisers for the formulation and execution of his policies. They departed from the lines laid down by his predecessors in many ways. But, although they differed from one another in their backgrounds and training and in their approach to their tasks, not one was executed or disgraced by the king once he had lost a leading position at court. Philip IV was loyal to the men he chose to do his bidding.

In the first part of his reign Philip devoted more time to hunting than to ruling but he retained the overall direction of policy. From about 1290 the Florentine bankers, Albizzo (*Biche*) and Musciatto (*Mouche*) Franzesi, were given considerable responsibility in the field of royal finances. Although they were eclipsed by other advisers from the mid-1290s, they remained in positions of trust until their deaths in 1307. At first receivers-general, then treasurers of the king, they played an important part in the opening phases of the Anglo-French war, and raised considerable sums from loans and export taxes. In the later 1290s their influence declined as the royal court began to use financial policies that made the participation of foreigners less practical.

It was now that a succession of royal advisers drawn from the royal administration emerged, and dominated royal policy. Many were lawyers by training, others were not, and they came from a variety of social backgrounds. By 1296 Peter Flotte had become Philip's leading adviser, a position he maintained until his death at the battle of Courtrai. A southern lawyer of noble extraction, he masterminded the king's negotiations with Boniface VIII, the Colonna, the English and Flemings. He also played an important role in the momentous financial expedients of the time. He was assisted by Giles Aicelin, archbishop of Narbonne, his nephew, a lawyer and diplomat,[103] and Peter of Mornay, bishop of Auxerre.

The debacle at Courtrai, when Flotte was killed, however, left the king angry and humiliated, and determined to avenge the honour of the crown. Deeply distressed by the death of Queen Joan of Navarre in 1305, and increasingly adopting a pious and austere lifestyle, he began to take a more active interest in the mechanics and details of government. At this time William of Nogaret emerged in the forefront of events. He was of bourgeois origins, formerly a professor of law at the university of Montpellier in the south of France, and appears to have been an able and ruthless character. Like his master, Nogaret has proved a controversial figure. Whether he was determined to combat the evils he saw in the Roman church, or whether he was a fanatical supporter of French royal power, particularly vis-à-vis the papacy, he certainly played a central role in some of the most important incidents of the reign – the humbling of Pope Boniface VIII, and the suppression of the Templars – as well as working out various financial plans for the king. He and

William of Plaisians, who had probably been a student of his, devised many sophisticated and vindictive expedients in the carrying out of their policies.[104]

Nogaret died in 1313, and Enguerran of Marigny, a Norman knight and not a lawyer, became the king's leading adviser.[105] He was Philip's finance minister; the controller of the treasury, the *chambre aux deniers* and the *chambre des comptes*; and the centre of a complex and corrupt web of patronage. The king entrusted Marigny with rather more power than his predecessors, and he aroused great hatred and opposition; indeed, he was under investigation at the time of Philip IV's death. By 1314 he looked fair to be replaced by Peter of Latilly, a lawyer from northern France, the king's chancellor and bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, but the king then died.

Such men as these built up important followings and they also created a substantial degree of hostility, at its most extreme manifested in the serial executions of the leading financial advisors of Philip IV, Philip V and Charles IV by their successors. This was too a manifestation of the strife between the two factions at court which had emerged by the end of Philip IV's reign and were still dominant at court in the early years of Philip VI.[106] One was the *chambre des comptes* party, the followers of Marigny and Miles of Noyers, noted for following Philip IV's financial methods and expedients. The other was the *parlement* party, headed by the Valois princes and Robert of Artois, more conservative in approach.

This latter faction dominated Louis X, who was an ineffectual character, and engineered the fall and execution of Marigny. Stephen of Mornay, one of its leading lights, became the king's chancellor. The nephew of Philip IV's adviser, Peter of Mornay, he was of noble origins and had earlier been chancellor to Charles of Valois. The party's financial demands were moderate, as were any administrative changes it sought to make.

Philip V, seeking to be a more authoritarian ruler than his brother, reversed his policies and restored the *chambre des comptes* group to power again. He reappointed to high positions Henry of Sully, Miles of Noyers, William Flotte and others who had risen under Philip IV. They began to demand heavy subsidies, and worked to bring about a streamlining of the administration. Ordinances were promulgated to regulate the *parlement*, household and finance bureaux, and attempts were made to extend the levying of taxes to times of peace, albeit that reforms were offered in return.

This approach accrued significant resistance, and Charles IV probably averted a crisis by a return to the policies and personnel of the *parlement* faction. Stephen of Mornay was reinstated and traditional methods of raising money exploited to the full. On his accession Philip VI continued to favour this faction for a while; but in the 1330s the *chambre des comptes* party under Miles of Noyers would again be recalled from political exile by the king, when he found himself unable to manage within the ordinary revenues of the crown.

Royal administration and justice

As the range of affairs in which the king could intervene widened considerably, the last Capetians required a large, sophisticated and complex bureaucracy to run

the affairs of state, employing many thousands of officials in Paris and in the regions. At the centre were at least 150 counsellors, judges, treasurers, diplomats, army commanders and envoys to the regions, supported by numerous clerks and notaries. High-ranking officials in the regions included *baillis*, *prévôts*, lawyers and judges, tax collectors, again with their own legions of subordinate officials. Both centrally and locally these leading administrators served the king on average for about 20 years.

Although much of the routine work of government in Paris was carried out by local men, some of the higher posts in Paris went to men from Normandy, Languedoc and other provinces, and some local governors were drawn from outside their own regions. Most were from the higher nobility and clergy, but some non-noble families managed to break into the charmed circle, perhaps, as in the case of William of Nogaret, being ennobled in the process.[107] Whole dynasties of royal servants, their families and dependents flourished at court, the patronage of existing civil servants often being the key to their first appointment: an example is Enguerran of Marigny, whose first appointment in the queen's household was arranged by his cousin Nicholas of Fréauville, the king's confessor. Their salaries in Paris were no more than those enjoyed by provincial judges, but they also had major opportunities to acquire grants and pensions and to trade them for substantial estates.

At the local level administration was managed by the *baillis* in the old royal domain – the Île-de-France – and the northern and eastern parts of France (e.g., Normandy, Champagne, Auvergne), and the seneschals in the southern and western areas (e.g., Poitou, Toulouse, Carcassonne). The *baillis*, generally supported by *prévôts*, were administrators, under the direct control of the king and his officials in Paris, and were delegated only a proportion of royal authority. The *prévôts* were closer to viceroys, entrusted with almost full royal powers in their areas and commanding a variety of officials, such as *viguiers*, *bayles* and judges. Oversight from the centre was at the higher levels, and in practice there were great regional variations in the effectiveness with which royal policy could be implemented.[108]

The king's central judicial machinery increased in scope and scale in the period 1270 to 1328.[109] The *parlement*, fixed in Paris from 1303, was becoming more exclusively a legal body with a permanent professional staff, composed in the main of lay and clerical judges in almost equal numbers. Many were *baillis* and *sénéschaux*, canons and archdeacons from quite humble backgrounds, well versed in the different branches of the law – Roman, canon and customary.

The principal body within the *parlement* was the *grande chambre*, the royal court where the king sat. After about 1300 the peers of the realm also sat as a committee of this court, rather than as a court of their own, and the highest feudal court thus being absorbed by the principal royal court. The *grande chambre* handled all the royal cases and appeals from other royal courts, but two specialised bodies also grew up, the *chambre des requêtes*, numbering five justices in 1336, and the *chambre des enquêtes*, with 51. The first dealt with requests, and later all civil cases; the second, appeals. A long and complex process developed for hearing such cases in *parlement*. The earliest surviving ordinance regulating procedures dates from 1278, and there were others in 1291 and *c.*1296.

By the 1330s the judicial system had become clearly delineated and firmly fixed, losing in the process some of its early flexibility. A large staff of advocates and notaries was employed, and series of registers of different kinds of cases built up in great bulk. In addition to the *Olim* these recorded criminal cases from 1312, *jugés* or judgements from 1319, and from 1320 *accords* or concords.

Larger assemblies still continued to meet under the title of *parlements*, and to give judgements, as in 1317, 1318, 1326 and 1332, but these developments reflect a move towards an increased professionalisation of government and administration. The nobility and higher clergy still performed many of their traditional functions, but they were gradually becoming less influential in the affairs of state.

Ordinances and *établissements* that applied to the whole realm, not just the royal domain, were issued in far greater numbers than in Louis IX's reign. These covered a variety of matters, such as the regulation of coinage and military service to the crown, which was extended to the rear vassals of the king. This was used as the basis for levying war subsidies, and in 1317 Philip V deployed a national military force on this basis. Each town and castellany was to be responsible for providing soldiers and their arms, and military leaders and regional commanders were also appointed. The king sought further to extend his authority through the prohibition of private wars, of the carrying of arms in peacetime and of judicial duels. These were matters he managed to enforce in a number of principalities before 1314; but after the crisis of 1314–15 they were rather harder to forbid, for they were rights and privileges greatly valued by the nobility.

Royal finances and warfare

Many of the most dramatic political events of the period stemmed from the financial expedients used by the monarchy to fund its wars. Philip IV's experiments with taxation on a large scale and with currency manipulations are two particularly striking instances of attempts to raise money primarily for the wars with England and Flanders, which provoked great and widespread hostility to the crown. Yet the expedients required to sustain warfare greatly changed the nature of royal power, as between 1270 and about 1305 the crown established the obligations of the nobility and the church and of their vassals to serve in the royal army for the defence of the realm, and the principle that this should be funded by extraordinary taxation. Such obligations were at the same time much contested and often aroused significant opposition.[110]

Through his crusades and his moral authority Louis IX had greatly strengthened the ability of the king to call on the realm as a whole for the military forces to defend it (p. 323); and while under the later Capetians there was often resistance from some of the nobility toward supplying troops, there were still enough willing supporters to meet the king's needs. Thus, the crown was always able to raise armies of sufficient size and strength and with necessary speed.

But all this came at a cost: Philip III summoned the feudal levy on the basis that he would pay for it, and he and Philip IV gradually extended the obligation

for military service to all parts of the kingdom through the rear vassals of the great nobles. The king also had a ready supply of knights who served him direct in return for a regular payment or fief-rent. The crown's ability to raise an army could however be sustained only through a mixture of pressure and diplomacy, and through propaganda which stressed loyalty to the realm and the duty to defend it, as well as holding out the lure of glory, conquest and riches.[111]

At the same time in much of Europe, a well-filled treasury and fiscal stability came to be seen as a key attribute of the successful monarch. In France, the extension of sources of taxation called into question the idea that the king should live within his own resources, which would be replaced by the notion that he held fiscal powers throughout the realm. Although often resisted in practice, the justification of taxation for the good of the realm and its people would be a powerful propaganda tool. But this was a theoretical response to a practical problem: the receipts of the domain, while adequate to sustain the royal household, accounted merely for between a quarter and third of royal expenditure, and extraordinary taxation was very difficult to levy.[112]

In the period 1270–95 the royal finances were managed much as earlier, accounts being audited in the *chambre aux deniers*, the bureau of the royal accountant.[113] From 1295 the administration of royal finances became increasingly professionalised in order to manage the ever-more complex needs of the crown. The king removed his treasury from the Temple to the Louvre palace in 1295, and by 1306 instructions were being given for accounts to be rendered up to the *chambre des comptes*. Enguerran of Marigny reorganised this financial bureau and removed non-specialists. In 1320 it was constituted by royal ordinance as the royal accounting department: placed under the control of the royal chamber (*camera*), it was responsible for the auditing of the accounts and it was allowed judicial powers. Its personnel became fixed and specialised, and under Philip VI it would grow into a substantial department.

Whilst it administered the domain and audited the accounts, the money was collected in the king's treasury. In 1303 this body returned from the Louvre palace to the Temple. In an *ordonnance* of 1314, Philip IV and his treasurer Enguerran of Marigny laid down rules for its governance: two treasurers at the Louvre managed the receipts from taxation and loans and two more at the Temple, those from the domain. These were deployed to fund the household, which also became increasingly complex with the further expansion of the departments: confessor, almoner, chapel royal, *chambre aux deniers* and the all-powerful chancery, directing the court and government.[114] Its procedures developed under the last Capetians but while some officials exercised their powers with probity, others were noted for corruption. Amongst them was John of Cherchemont, chancellor to Philip V and Charles IV, reviled for exacting high fees for issuing and registering documents.

A number of general accounts survive from this period, albeit patchily; the annual incomings that they record from the whole of the royal domain average at about £656,000 and the outgoings £652,000. Although in 1286–7 Philip IV's ordinary income, largely from the domain, was £705,942, if extraordinary sources

are included, it was as high as £1,400,000 *parisis* – which was more than three times greater than the royal receipts of 60 years earlier.[115] What such accounts do not reveal is that Philip III's disastrous 1285 Aragonese expedition had cost the monarchy about £1,230,000 *tournois* (as earlier, five *tournois* pounds equalled four pounds *parisis*.)[116] The campaign in Gascony probably cost the king more than £2 million *tournois*, amounting to over £4,000 a day in the late 1290s.

Such sums proved impossible to recoup from the normal sources of royal income. If anything, these were falling in the long term, as some accounts from the early 1320s suggest.[117] The rising costs of military service and the costly war with England in 1294 made this problem more acute, and new sources of income had to be tapped. Until 1302–3 the king's revenues fluctuated but he was able to balance his books overall through inventive expedients. After his military defeat at Courtrai, however, the gap between expenditure and income became ever more difficult to meet.

In a reign characterised by innovative fiscal expedients, Philip IV pushed a number of royal rights to their limit and beyond in his efforts to raise money, and made major changes to the running of the royal finances.[118] His feudal aids, levied in 1308 for the marriage of Isabella and in 1313 for the knighting of Louis (X), were extended to rear vassals and to towns with charters of exemption.

There was a heavy tallage on the Jews in 1284, 1292 and 1303, and in 1306 they were expelled from the kingdom and their goods seized. Louis X allowed them to return in 1315, but Charles IV ejected them again in 1322. Against the backdrop of failing harvests and social instability, they were assigned blame, as usurers, for evoking God's wrath. Lombard and Florentine bankers, similarly blamed, had similar treatment from Philip III and Philip IV; although the adverse economic impact which resulted was to a degree mitigated by royal licences to trade being awarded to more favoured merchants, this time from the Iberian peninsula, Genoa and Venice.

Revenues began to be levied on imports and exports by Philip IV, and Charles IV set up a system for the regular collection of duties. Tenths were levied from the church in 1285 and 1288 for the Aragonese war, and again in 1294 and 1296 for the conflict with England. The latter levy was a significant trigger in the rupture with Boniface VIII, but Philip continued to raise these lucrative taxes, with or without papal consent, in 1297, 1299, 1301, 1303, 1304–6 (to restore the coinage), 1310 and 1312 (for a crusade). The last Capetians levied them too, and there were also occasional grants to the crown of annates, the first year's income from an ecclesiastical benefice by its new incumbent.

Extraordinary taxation was raised from the church on the basis of the needs of state and the defence of the realm in time of war, and the same justification was used for the taxation of the lay community. This made peacetime subsidies very difficult to levy; but such was the opposition even to war subsidies that a number of methods of raising them had to be tried before an effective way could be found. In 1291 a penny in the pound was levied on all sales and purchases, and this was repeated in 1296 and 1314. In 1295 a tax on all stock and merchandise was

imposed that caused a great outcry. Widely known as the *maltôte* (the bad tax), it, too, was repeated in 1327 and later.

Clearly neither of these taxes was very successful in the 1290s, however, so Philip tried another approach, and in 1295 raised a hundredth on the value of lands, goods and revenues. Declarations were rather low, and so were yields, but this hundredth was reckoned by a contemporary to raise in the order of £315,000 *tournois*. In 1296 the same tax was levied at the rate of a fiftieth and, in order to secure it from outside the domain, the king allowed the great barons to keep one-half, ecclesiastical lords, one-third, and certain other nobles, one-quarter. A twenty-fifth was levied in 1297, and fiftieths in 1300 and 1302. These levies were based on the principle that the king could raise a general tax for the defence of the realm by declaring a state of emergency but not summoning the army.

This system caused considerable opposition and after the crisis of 1303 the king abandoned this approach and based later subsidies on his controversial right to military service in times of war. The *arrière-ban* was called, imposing service on the vassals of his vassals. This was then extended to compel each person to pay a tax instead: for nobles this consisted of a fifth of their annual income whilst non-nobles were subject to hearth tax, that is, for paying for a number of sergeants for every 100 hearths, which varied according to the status of the contributors. Unfree peasants were exempted in 1304.

The consent of the regional and local communities to hearth tax was sought, and on some occasions they were allowed to share the profits, but this measure was hated as much as the others. There was some reaction to it in 1304–5, and a great deal in 1313 and 1314–15. In 1313 when the tax was already being raised for the war with Flanders, peace was made. The subsidy was cancelled and returned, setting an important precedent: if the emergency ended the king could no longer demand taxation. In 1314 Philip was forced to cancel the subsidy again because of the extent of opposition to it.

Hostility to these taxes continued during the reigns of Philip's sons and, in an attempt to placate the contributors, varying methods of raising them were used from region to region. The non-nobles in the south would accept the hearth tax, the north preferred the *maltôte*, and the nobility a straight subsidy. Nevertheless, the principle that the king had the right to levy an army from across the kingdom, and to pay for it through taxation, was generally accepted, and the arrangements put in place by Philip IV for raising armies would remain in place into the Hundred Years War.

How much money did these measures bring in? The isolated accounts that have survived indicate that sums from any one source varied greatly from year to year; in 1295 the tax on the Lombards produced £65,000 *tournois*, but in 1323 only £8,652. The 1295 subsidy brought in some £350,000 *parisis*, and that of 1304 £570,000 *tournois*, whilst in 1329 only £150,000 *parisis* was raised. These sums must have more than doubled the royal incomings in years of war, but warfare was highly expensive, and the gap could not be filled. Philip IV borrowed large sums of money: in 1294, for example, the towns gave him £630,000 and

he was advanced £200,000 from the fairs of Champagne. Such sums he often neglected to repay for many years, if at all.

In his most extreme measure of all, from 1295 onwards the king began to manipulate the currency.[119] The process was complex, involving the modification of exchange rates between currencies fixed by weight, such as the silver mark (approximately 490 grammes) and the royal silver coinage. This latter was recalled, melted down and restruck at a lower weight but with the same face value, the king thus gaining by creating more coins from a given weight of metal and retaining the surplus money.

In the early stages there was no obvious debasement of the metal used, although this later became a much-favoured expedient. But the effects were dramatic, for the mark, which had exchanged for 54 shillings *tournois* in 1290, rose to 68 shillings by the end of 1296, and 104 shillings in 1303. The king made £1,200,000 from this expedient in 1298–9, and a much lower £185,000 in 1301, but prices rose rapidly and there were considerable international repercussions, since trade was disrupted and the money owed to foreign bankers was devalued. The import and export of bullion was banned in 1295, in part as a measure to protect the French economy, in part as a means of putting pressure on Pope Boniface VIII. It also had serious repercussions in Flanders, which depended heavily on trade with England. In 1297 its count, Guy of Dampierre, broke with the king, but the warfare that followed made necessary further manipulations of the currency.

By 1303 a crisis point had been reached, and strong demands were made throughout the kingdom for a return to the coinage of Saint Louis. In 1306 the king began to revalue the currency in response, and fixed the price of a silver mark at 55s. 6d.; but prices failed to come down and the reform did not last long. Royal coins, despite for the first time bearing an image of the king, were debased in quality after 1311, and this created another financial crisis; many merchants were ruined, according to Geoffrey of Paris. Another return to good money was followed by further debasements under Charles IV, and the Valois kings used currency manipulations as a regular measure to finance their wars.

A system for levying customs duties was also developed in the late Capetian period, associated with Peter of Chalon, a royal clerk. From about 1305 he had the borders closed and manned so that tariffs could be collected on goods crossing them, and set up a central organisation to audit the books. In the 1320s he helped to establish the *droit de rève*, a fixed tax on the export of a large number of commodities. This tax seems to have been intended initially as much to protect the French economy and to derive political advantages as to raise revenues, but later it was to become a valuable source of income for the French king.[120]

How successful, then, were the last Capetians in organising their receipts and expenditure to enable them to fund their great ambitions? The patchy survival of their accounts means that a precise answer cannot be given, but the overall picture is clear. Although they and their advisers found many inventive and many oppressive ways to raise new taxes and to bolster existing sources of revenues, and although they reorganised their financial administration, their revenues were still

not sufficient to fund their expenditure on matters of state, on warfare and on an ambitious and active policy on the European stage.[121]

The royal domain and the apanages

The royal domain expanded very substantially during the later Capetian period. Philip IV's marriage in 1284 brought him Navarre, Champagne and Brie. The union of Joan of Burgundy and the future Philip V brought the county of Burgundy into the French sphere of influence and eventually to the crown – at considerable expense to Philip IV. Whereas the duchy of Burgundy lay within the French kingdom, these neighbouring lands – known also as Franche-Comté – were in the empire, beyond the borders of France. Philip extended the French boundary de facto to include them while always recognising technical imperial overlordship. The arrangement proved untenable and Philip V returned them.[122] However, Valenciennes, Bar, Lyons and Viviers, regarded by the French crown and its lawyers as lying within the historic borders of the kingdom, were brought into French suzerainty at the expense of the empire by a process of purchase or peaceful incursion, an effective way of expanding royal power in this region.[123]

Land was also acquired by the crown in smaller parcels by purchase, rent or co-administration (*pariage*); for example, Philip III bought Guines in 1281, and Philip IV purchased Chartres in 1286, Beaugency in 1291, Maguelone and part of Montpellier in 1293, and Lomagne in 1302. Then in 1306 he advanced Hugh XIII of Lusignan, count of La Marche and Angoulême, considerable sums of money on the security of his lands, which in 1308 he took over on Hugh's death.

Much land came to the crown also through the return of former apanages, a term first used in 1316 to refer to an arrangement to endow younger sons with suitable estates, a practice which was by this time already more than a century old. The grants of apanages continued, but the reversion of these to the king marked a major shift in inheritance practices. Until 1270 the Capetian monarchs, like the nobility of the realm, saw their lands as family estates. They had passed their patrimonies on to their eldest surviving sons, and had given lands gained by marriage, inheritance or conquest to younger sons who would hold them as fiefs from the principal heir. The apanages created by Louis IX were intended to enrich royal cadets; that they introduced royal justice and administration into areas that had never known it was fortuitous.

Under the later Capetians there was a gradual shift towards the making of all apanage grants conditional and a divergence in royal and baronial inheritance practices. The royal lands became a unitary holding that was distinct in character from that of other important families. When Alfonso of Poitiers died in 1271, Charles of Anjou claimed that his lands should go to him as the next heir. But in 1284, *parlement* found against this, ruling that a reversion clause had been implicit in Louis VIII's will of 1226: the royal grants had been made as gifts, not as inheritance, and they must revert to the king. This important ruling in time allowed reversion clauses to be applied retrospectively to all apanage grants. In 1314 moreover,

the succession in apanages was limited to males only and ultimate judicial control given to the *parlement* in Paris. Royal officials administered royal rights in the apanages, and in return the apanaged princes were permitted to raise taxes and military service on the king's behalf. The apanagists' family ties with the king generally ensured a high level of collaboration between them.[124]

Younger sons of the king still needed to be set up with suitable estates, some drawn from royal lands, some as ever through advantageous marriages. Thus Philip III awarded Valois to Charles, his second son, and to Louis, the third, he gave Beaumont-sur-Oise. Philip IV added to these holdings by giving Alençon, Perche and Chartres to Charles of Valois, and Évreux to Louis, as they reverted to the crown. Furthermore, Charles was married to a daughter of Charles II of Anjou and Sicily, a descendant of Louis IX's brother, and she brought with her both Anjou and Maine. But Philip IV had less to spare for his own younger sons, both of whom in the event became kings after Louis X. One, Philip, was given a much-circumscribed county of Poitiers, another, Charles, La Marche and Angoulême.

The high mortality rate of the royal princes would bring many of their apanages back to the crown, and the accession of Philip VI of Valois in 1328 united his great holdings of Anjou and Maine with the royal domain as well. Although substantial holdings including Artois, Bourbon, Évreux, La Marche and Angoulême remained as apanages, the royal domain was greater by far than the other lands put together (Map 6.1). The apanage system had thus in practice worked in the king's favour.

At the same time however two ostensibly contradictory ideas emerged: that the apanages formed part of a fixed territorial royal domain, but yet that any of the king's children could lay claim to any recently acquired part of this domain. For example, in 1317 Charles, brother of Louis X, demanded a share in all the acquisitions made by the French kings since Louis IX, and Edward II of England did the same by virtue of the claims of his wife Isabella, daughter of Philip IV. Isabella's claims were not, however, as strong as those of her brothers since in 1314 Philip IV had forbidden women the right to inherit the apanage of his son Philip of Poitiers. This was far from a universal restriction, and Louis X revoked the Poitiers provision, but it was a foretaste of the events that were to deny women succession rights to the throne of France (p. 433).

General and regional assemblies

The assemblies summoned by Philip IV and his sons have sometimes been characterised as institutions that, whilst not as 'representative' as the English parliaments, still had a limiting function on the monarchy, since they were required to give consent to taxation and backing for royal policies, and to support and limit royal power as seemed necessary in return for concessions. It is true that later Capetian assemblies often made demands and sometimes refused their agreement to taxation, but their effectiveness in doing so can easily be overestimated.

Most of these meetings were called primarily to give counsel, to show support for royal policies, rather than to consent to them; the latter course was necessary

only when the king was attempting to infringe the rights of his subjects.[125] They were above all a vehicle for royal propaganda, and their great variations in composition and business are a clear sign that they were still, in 1328, very much in the experimental stage.[126] When they began to make demands the king sometimes paid lip service to meeting them, but made almost no real concessions, even after the 1314–15 crisis.

The most celebrated assemblies of this period were those summoned by Philip IV to provide him with backing for his opposition to Boniface VIII (1303) and to support the dissolution of the Templars (1308). They were general assemblies drawn from many parts of the kingdom and from the three estates – nobles, clergy and burgesses; and on both occasions, having been skillfully managed, they gave the royal policies their full support. Other such gatherings considered matters such as the coinage, military service and a proposed French crusade.

A general meeting of burgesses gave the proposed subsidy of 1314 its approval but it proved impossible to collect in practice, and in 1321 two general assemblies at Paris and Poitiers did not show any enthusiasm for the idea of a peacetime subsidy to finance general reforms. The clergy agreed, the nobles remained indifferent, and the townsmen deferred their answer to another general assembly at Orléans. When this met they gave a refusal, and apologised for giving 'so little counsel to the king'.[127] Furthermore this meeting rebounded as a propaganda exercise, as wild rumours about extortionate taxation began to circulate, and a gathering crisis was averted only by the unexpected death of Philip V. Such experiments demonstrated the ineffectiveness of using central assemblies to endorse taxation. Charles IV returned to the policies of Philip IV and Louis X, who had used general assemblies only in a limited way, and carried out his most effective negotiations on a regional or local basis.

Regional assemblies had assumed an important role in the political life of many parts of France in the later thirteenth century. In the Languedoc they had filled various functions: acting as courts, endorsing the regulation of imports and exports, and being consulted about military service and taxation.[128] As did regional assemblies in other parts of France, they laid great stress on their duties of giving counsel rather than their right to grant consent, and this attitude continued into Philip IV's reign, when they were used more systematically to endorse royal subsidies.

Yet there was also a growing opposition to this royal taxation and demands were increasingly made for the redress of grievances in return for consent to subsidies.[129] In 1304, for example, many of the regional assemblies demanded the repayment of royal debts, freedom from further impositions for a year, and the recognition that this grant was a gift, not an obligation. In the same year provincial assemblies of clergy, called to endorse the same taxes, almost all demanded the reform of the currency, free amortisation and exemption from military service for French prelates. Some of these conditions were agreed, and the subsidy was agreed, but certain provinces resisted, and the archbishop of Rouen was imprisoned for opposing demands for royal taxation. This opposition had some impact however, and after hard bargaining with the regional assemblies, royal officials were compelled to reduce their demands in order to secure any payment at all.

In 1314 the regional assemblies refused outright to endorse the subsidy already agreed by a general assembly, and the strength of reaction to it compelled the king to cancel it. The leagues that then formed were in effect unofficial regional assemblies, flexing their political and military muscles, and their demands reflected many of those made earlier. They were put forward as a general programme but adapted to regional needs, and Louis X conceded to many of their demands in a limited way – as his father had done earlier.

On the whole, therefore, the crown found that negotiations with regional assemblies were a far more effective way of raising taxes than consulting with general ones. Despite their growing opposition to the king their first outright refusal of consent to taxation, in 1314, came relatively late. Under the Valois kings the regional assemblies were to continue as flourishing institutions, whilst the general ones would ultimately fade away. This was symptomatic of the importance of provincial loyalties and provincial institutions in later medieval France.

The crisis of 1314 and the charters of 1315

In the last 25 years of Capetian rule there were three periods of crisis when royal authority was directly resisted. The first was in 1303–5, when Philip IV was defeated at Courtrai, had his demands for taxation strongly condemned, and had to reissue Louis IX's ordinance for the reform of the realm. He was also obliged to grant a charter of liberties to the nobles of the Auvergne, and to promise other general concessions, thus reducing the opposition. A third crisis would gather in 1322 when Philip V died, as already shown (p. 371).

The second crisis, in 1314–15, was the most severe of the three by far. The king's demands for taxation were openly opposed, and hostile leagues, composed mainly of nobles, formed not just in all the areas directly under royal domination but also in some of the principalities most closely under the royal influence. Their demands, reacting against not just fiscal but other wider oppressions and misgovernance, reiterated many of those made earlier by the local assemblies, but on this occasion they were ready to back them up with force.[130]

In 1314 the royal tax collectors found the subsidy for the Flemish campaign difficult to collect, and the failure of the war exacerbated a general anger in the French provinces. Local assemblies met first in secret, then openly, to discuss their grievances, and groups of nobles from northern France complained to Philip IV that the taxation was unjust. All they received in return, said Geoffrey of Paris, who told the tale, were fine words,[131] and the king wrote to his *baillis* and *sénéschaux* ordering them to arrest local troublemakers.

Meanwhile, provincial leagues had been forming. The earliest, which may serve as an example, coalesced in Burgundy, at a massive assembly held in Dijon. Although the duke himself was not involved, it was headed by the important nobles of the region under John of Châlon, count of Auxerre, representing also 29 important religious houses and chapters, including Cîteaux and Flavigny, and 11 communes, including Autun and Avallon. Its members took a solemn oath to

resist the subsidy and all other unreasonable royal activities, and deputed a small committee to organise the league's activities and to keep its records. Burgundy made alliances with neighbouring leagues in Champagne, Forez, and later with Vermandois, Beauvaisis, Ponthieu and Artois.

The allies drew up charters expressing their aims, but retaining a tone of great respect for the king, to whom they proclaimed their allegiance. By now Philip IV was on his deathbed. One of his last actions was to cancel the subsidy, and he was preparing to reissue the 1303 reforming ordinance. Yet by the end of 1314 the leagues had become firmly entrenched, and were demanding a return to the customs of Saint Louis. The accession of the new king brought about a change of policy and personnel at court, and the fall of Marigny. This was not connected with the demands of the leagues, although it undoubtedly helped Louis X to negotiate with them. This he did in a statesmanlike way.

Early in 1315 the new king granted charters to those parts of the domain whose representatives had raised their objections at court. The first to benefit was Normandy (19 March). Louis X agreed that he would provide good administration in the duchy, and promised that sound money would be established and maintained. Feudal aids not prescribed by ancient custom would not be levied, and tallage would be raised only in cases of urgent necessity. In April another charter was given, to Languedoc, limiting the powers of *parlement* and the royal administrators. Some reimbursements for the subsidies already collected were also made, and the opposition, so strong that two of the consuls of Nîmes had refused to pay and were imprisoned, gradually abated.

Louis then began to agree to the demands of the leagues and to issue charters to them. A first batch was given at Easter and, after royal *enquêteurs* had made investigations in each region, a second series of charters was given embodying the results of their enquiries. Common to all was a promise that the activities of the royal officials would be carefully supervised and curtailed if necessary. The ancient right of the nobles to hold tournaments, wage private wars and hold trials by battle would also be respected, and the king would not levy aid and military service from their vassals, but from them alone.

Although these general promises appeared in most of the charters, the other concessions made varied from region to region. The Norman charter affected non-nobles as well as nobles and was heavily biased towards legal procedure. The charters to the Burgundians, Champenois and people of Artois were aimed at redressing the grievances of the nobles who had organised and led the leagues. The charter to Languedoc reflected clearly the importance of Roman law and popular liberties in this region. Another set of charters was issued to the French bishops, promising that their ancient customary rights would be observed.

There were many elements in these charters in common, and general charters of liberties based on the models of 1303 were issued both to the French church and to the French people. But the differences between the leagues proved stronger than the similarities, and the real bargaining between the king and his disaffected subjects went on at a regional level, the charters that resulted reflecting the differences

between the regions. In some there was hostility between the nobles and the townsfolk over the leagues, the townsfolk refusing to support the demands of the nobles so that the king made promises only to a limited section of society. This inability of the opposition to form a national, broadly based and coherent programme allowed Louis X to negotiate separately with each group, and greatly strengthened his hand – although he did have once more to concede the principle that the crown's freedom to tax its subjects could be limited.

In their regional focus, the charters form a contrast with Magna Carta, the great charter given to the English barons in 1215, which contained statements of general principle as well as the redressment of specific grievances. It may not be a coincidence that the Norman charter of 1315 reflected a wider range of interests than the others, and that it became as much a symbol of Norman liberties as Magna Carta was in England. The original was kept safely in Rouen cathedral, its text being confirmed in 1339 by Philip VI, in 1380 by Charles VI, and later, in 1423, 1458 and 1461.

The other provinces assigned less long-term importance to their charters and all settled down quite quickly after 1315, apart from Burgundy and Picardy – which put up some resistance – and Artois. Here the revolt was complicated by being directed against the apanaged countess Mahaut as well as against the king, a contrast with the duchy of Burgundy, where ducal activities had occasioned far less resentment than royal ones. All the other apanaged princes at court supported Mahaut, and the king succeeded in getting them to put pressure on her to ensure that she would deal fairly with her baronage.

After Louis X's death, however, the revolt entered a new phase as leadership of the barons of Artois was assumed by Robert (III), Mahaut's nephew and a rival claimant to the county. He gained some support from the duke of Burgundy and tried to mobilise the leagues in Burgundy and Picardy. But Mahaut was Philip V's mother-in-law, and earned his gratitude when she supported his succession to the throne. Furthermore, when Philip settled his differences with the duke of Burgundy, and when his own wife Joan became the recognised heiress to Mahaut for Artois in 1318, Robert's claims were overruled by the king and the other princes. Careful steps were taken to conciliate Mahaut and the nobles of Artois, thus finally putting down a major dissension in the kingdom as the rebellious county submitted to the king's will.

The king and the principalities

The baronial movement of 1314–15 was more than just a reaction against Capetian taxation and administrative centralisation, for the charters given by Louis X to the various leagues are a clear indication of strong and continuing regional identities in French society. France in 1314 was divided between those great fiefs that resisted closer royal control, such as Gascony and Flanders, and the provinces in the domain or under close royal control and that acknowledged and accepted a degree of royal oversight, such as Normandy, Languedoc, Burgundy, Brittany and

Champagne. Yet in the later Capetian era they too would increasingly press for their rights, and by the end of the fourteenth century strongly asserted their identities as the French kingdom to a large extent splintered back into princedoms.

The frequently painted picture of an aggressive centralising late Capetian monarchy is exemplified in relations with Flanders.[132] A county dominated by the textile industry, whose institutions were well developed by 1200, it had strong socio-economic and cultural ties with neighbouring principalities such as Brabant and Holland which were subject to the Holy Roman Empire. From the 1290s Flanders, under Guy of Dampierre (1278–1305) and then Robert of Béthune (1305–22), strove to break away from its French overlord in alliance with England, the primary supplier of its most important raw material, wool. The series of devastating wars which ensued, compounded by famine, exacerbated social tensions. Count Louis of Nevers (1322–48) proved a weak ruler who brought in the French king to curb widespread revolts. From the ensuing chaos the three economic powerhouses of Ghent, Bruges and Ypres would go on to achieve a high level of autonomy by the 1340s, before being drawn into a power-sharing arrangement with the count by 1360.

Until 1307 faced by the powerful and prestigious Edward I of England as their vassal, Philip III and Philip IV were similarly very militant in their dealings with the duchy of Gascony, known also as Aquitaine, the surviving Plantagenet dominions in France (pp. 336–340).[133] This land was seen by many contemporaries as almost ungovernable, its nobles prone to waging private wars and ready to play off their ducal ruler against his Capetian overlord. There was a major and costly conflict between Philip IV and Edward I in 1294–8 and much of the duchy, including Bordeaux, was occupied by the French king's forces from 1294–1303, until returned to the English king. This brought economic hardship to Bordeaux, which rose in revolt against Philip's forces in 1303, and hardened resistance against the Capetians.

By the early 1300s English royal lawyers were beginning to argue that the duchy was an allod, independent of the French crown, and all Philip IV's efforts in the duchy were aimed to show that Gascony was, rather, an integral part of the French kingdom.[134] Despite strong French protests the future Edward II, as duke of Gascony, refused to expel the Jews in 1306, and did not cast them out until 1310. The Gascon nobles refused to obey the French king's prohibition of bearing arms without royal permission, whilst the English king and the Gascon seneschal protested angrily against Philip IV's currency regulations in 1313.

Even greater tensions were stirred up by the French king's attempts to extend his rights over justice in the duchy, Philip III's administrators intervening on several occasions to try to modify its customs. A number of appeals went to the *parlement* in Paris, but there was strong resistance to this from the English kings, as there was to French taxation of Gascony. Edward I and Edward II continued to exercise regalian rights such as declarations of legitimacy and licensing fairs and markets. They also performed homage that was conditional on the fulfilment of the obligations incurred by the French kings in the treaties of 1259 and 1303.

After 1307, Edward II's political weakness at home could be exploited by Philip IV and the later Capetians. Edward's queen, Isabella, Philip's daughter, took centre stage in political events across the Channel, overseeing her husband's overthrow and the succession of her son Edward III as king of England in 1327. The war of Saint-Sardos took place in 1324–6 against the backdrop of increasing internal turbulence within greater Gascony but was prompted primarily by the aggression of Charles IV and his counsellors. The advent of Philip VI only intensified the pressures and tensions between the two crowns.[135]

Although the great provinces of Normandy and Languedoc formed a significant part of the royal domain, each retained a strong identity. The Norman exchequer resisted the encroachment of royal power, but the Norman nobles became disgruntled with the number of cases going from it to *parlement* in Paris. Whilst the infringement of Norman rights was in reality limited, they took issue with what appeared to be a strong drive from the central government to increase its powers.[136] In Languedoc, the former lands of Alfonso of Poitiers had passed peacefully to Philip III in 1271, and were added to the royal domain, but under Philip IV this region began to show strong signs of disaffection, reacting against a growing number of appeals going to Paris and against the increased powers of the royal *enquêteurs*. However, while unable to stamp out endemic private warfare, by 1300 the king's authority was sufficient to outlaw conflict against the crown and its agents.[137]

Hostility in both provinces was focussed on tax collectors and officials whose offices were farmed out to avaricious deputies, but meanwhile other officials such as the viscounts in Normandy and the *viguiers* in Languedoc carried out their routine tasks with far less opposition, providing badly needed stability.[138] Royal power in both provinces saw major challenges from the leagues which in 1315 wrung substantial concessions from the crown (pp. 404–406).

Thereafter, having retained its own language and law, Languedoc developed its own representative institutions and *parlement* at Toulouse. From about 1337 it would also be placed permanently under its own governor, who acted as a viceroy, and it was to remain relatively independent throughout the fourteenth century. Normandy would hold on to its customs and its separate exchequer, and its charter became the symbol of its liberties. At the end of the fourteenth century it too was denying that it belonged to the French kingdom, even though its dukes were the French kings or their heirs.

The dukes of Burgundy were tied closely to the Capetians by marriage, and supported them fairly consistently in their political activities. There was little jurisdictional tension between the king and the duke and appeals went from the ducal courts (the *Grands Jours de Beaune*) and other courts to Paris, relatively automatically and unchallenged. Furthermore, royal legislation was not enforced in Burgundy unless the duke gave his consent, and frequently he was awarded substantial concessions for so doing. The Templars were suppressed here only in return for a grant of all the profits and subsidies split between king and duke.

Nevertheless, the dukes rendered Philip IV extra service in the years that followed Courtrai, and they were unable to prevent or control the collection of the

hearth tax by the crown, based on royal rights of military service, in 1303 and 1314. It was the imposition of the latter tax that finally sparked off the formation of the noble leagues – and it was perhaps curious that no reference to unjust taxation appeared in the 1315 charter to the Burgundians.[139]

Brittany's administration had been created by the Plantagenet kings and later by Peter Mauclerc (pp. 64–65), and it had its own *parlement* and financial institutions. Royal justice and other royal rights became increasingly effective, and until 1297 the king was here able to impose taxation fairly freely, and to appoint to several bishoprics, even when allowing the duke the theoretical power to do so. But in that year Duke John II received formal recognition as a duke and a peer of France, in return for performing liege homage, and the king's power, whilst extended in theory, in practice was exercised less frequently. In 1314–15 the duke obtained a statement from the crown defining and strictly limiting the circumstances that warranted its judicial intervention.[140] By the 1340s the dukes, with English support, were claiming to rule by the grace of God over the Breton 'kingdom', and in the 1390s suggestions were made, bolstered by forged documents, that Brittany like Gascony was no part of France. The dukes had developed their powers and administrative structures sufficiently well to back up these claims.

Champagne came to Philip IV with his marriage to Joan of Navarre in 1284, and although on her death in 1305 it passed to Prince Louis (X), and was not officially united to the royal domain until 1361, the weakness of its institutions brought it closely under royal control from Philip IV's accession. Its court, the *Grands Jours*, was rapidly brought under the authority of the *parlement* and staffed by justices from Paris. By the beginning of the fifteenth century this institution had faded away altogether, its business being conducted in the capital.[141]

Thus whilst the authority and attributes of the crown increased greatly during the later Capetian period, they did not swamp regional identities in the way that might be inferred from an analysis focussed on the royal administration alone. The principalities had retained their own customs over three centuries, and their leaders resisted the incursions of royal justice on behalf of their local communities. The principalities, the regional communities, although apparently submerged in the French kingdom, and certainly weakened under Louis IX and his successors, had continued to exist throughout the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. During the Hundred Years War they would re-emerge under new leadership.

The kings and the church

The kings and the French church, 1270–1328

Like their contemporaries in England, the successors of Saint Louis kept the French church as far as possible firmly under control, gradually redrawing the boundaries between church and state control in favour of the secular power.[142] At the same time they continued to rely on the church for support and assistance in government, and although there were very real tensions between Philip IV, in particular,

and the papacy, the crown's concerns were with curtailing ecclesiastical powers rather than abolishing them.

For example, in 1275 Philip III promulgated an important ordinance on the amortisation of land – that is, its granting to the church. Lay lords had long been extending their rights to control this process, and Louis IX had shown some interest in it, so that this authority was gradually concentrated into the hands of the barons and the king. Philip III took overall control of the process, extending the royal authority into allods as well as fiefs. Selected peers were granted powers in their own rear-fiefs, and the notion of a licence to amortise was introduced. Through it the licenser, the king or lord, could collect at least one year's revenues from the land or rights being transferred to the church or could even refuse permission for the gift to take place altogether.

Most of the French prelates supported Philip IV in his quarrel with Pope Boniface VIII and in his suppression of the Templars – one good reason being that many had been given their benefices by the king, and had risen in the royal service. Both king and pope taxed the French church heavily and consistently, with Boniface VIII's opposition to the levying of subsidies from it without papal permission being completely relinquished by his successors. The king's counsellors portrayed the payment of these taxes as being the duty of the French church, and when in 1305 the archbishop of Tours invoked Boniface VIII's ruling and refused to collect a double tenth until certain conditions had been met, royal adviser William of Plaisians had his temporalities seized. The same treatment was given to those prelates who attended this pope's synod in Rome in 1302; indeed, had the royal army not been defeated in Flanders shortly before, it is doubtful whether more than a handful of bishops would have dared to go to the Eternal City at all.

The provincial assemblies of clergy, meeting to ratify the royal demands for taxation, forwarded their grievances to the royal administration with regularity, grievances that were fully discussed at the papal council of Vienne in 1311–12. These focussed on the constant encroachment of lay jurisdiction on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and on the trial and sentencing of clerks (ordained clergy) in lay courts. Clerks were being forced to pay tallage from which they were exempt; if they refused their goods were seized. Royal officials were persecuting ecclesiastics, preventing them from making excommunications, taking their land. The counter-argument by the king's men was that ecclesiastics were invading royal privileges, and using benefit of clergy to escape scot-free from their crimes, and it was this view that prevailed in practice.

There were major disputes between royal officials and the churches of Chartres, Poitiers and Lyons – and here the royal interests won. These were examples enough to persuade most of the French church to develop no wish for conflict with the crown, and Philip and his advisers could be evenhanded. Royal officials were even on occasions rebuked for being too severe with the church in their areas, and ecclesiastics often preferred to compromise with the crown rather than to pursue damaging claims; instead they would appeal to the crown direct. The royal

chancery issued many charters of safeguard and protection to individual churches, and charters of liberties to ecclesiastical assemblies, as in 1290, 1300 and 1303 – although in practical terms these had limited value. The king was recognised as master by most of the French church.

Only in the south was there any concerted resistance to him. The opposition from the church in the Languedoc was in part a response to demands for subsidies, in part connected with a wider dissatisfaction in the region with northern French rule. There was also a general detestation of the inquisition, which was run by the Dominican order. In 1301 Bernard Délicieux, a charismatic Franciscan friar of Carcassonne and leader of the opposition to the inquisition, in an audience with Philip the Fair and Queen Joan of Navarre, persuaded the king to revoke its privileges and to submit it to the episcopate and the rival Franciscan order. This was a remarkable achievement.

This success was however celebrated in an extreme and inflammatory way, and Languedoc was soon in such turmoil, with mobs attacking the inquisitors and their supporters, that in 1303 the king travelled to the region to restore order. Although he recognised the need to crack down on corrupt officials and maladministration which was contributing to the unrest, Philip was greatly angered when at Toulouse a turbulent mob treated him with offensive familiarity. Following a hearing of both sides of the case, the king largely revoked his rulings over the inquisition. Délicieux turned to Ferdinand of Majorca for help, but this treason was discovered, and he was brought to Paris for trial. In the stirring events of the next few years he was forgotten, and released, to reappear a few years later in Languedoc, as a champion of the Spiritual Franciscans and the *béguines*. Eventually accused of treason, necromancy and of poisoning Pope Benedict XI, in 1318, on the orders of Pope John XXII, he was tried at Avignon, convicted and degraded from his orders.[143]

Bernard Délicieux was perhaps fortunate in 1303 that the attention of the royal court was focussed on Bernard Saisset, bishop of Pamiers, who was at the centre of the second dispute between the king and Boniface VIII (pp. 414–415). Other ecclesiastics became scapegoats for crimes and offences they clearly had not committed, and had lurid and preposterous accusations levelled against them. Boniface VIII and the Templars are obvious examples; the affair of Guichard, bishop of Troyes, is another important instance, and indicative of the lengths to which the king's advisers would go in pursuing their moral imperatives on his behalf. Guichard, a brutal and violent man who had attracted many enemies, had risen to prominence in the service of Queen Joan of Navarre, but after his elevation to the bishopric he quarrelled bitterly with Joan and the future Louis X. Louis attributed Joan's death in 1305 to sorcery at Guichard's behest, and the *bailli* of Sens was charged with making a full inquiry.

Then William of Nogaret took over the case, and presented Guichard to a group of papal commissioners as a sorcerer and a witch. These baseless allegations were treated seriously by Guichard's judges, who had him imprisoned. But whilst he lost his place in court politics, he was fortunate enough to escape execution at the last minute, as did Bernard Saisset and Bernard Délicieux. His fall seems to have

been engineered by his enemies for purely political reasons, and many contemporary writers, including Geoffrey of Paris, and the author of the *Roman de Renart*, were convinced of his innocence.[144]

The full wrath of the state fell also upon far more humble people who transgressed against the might of approved religious orthodoxies and could be portrayed as enemies who were undermining the king's role as 'pope in his kingdom'. In 1310 Margaret Porete, a *béguine* and mystic, was burned at the stake in Paris along with her widely popular vernacular writings, while her supporter Guiard of Cressonessard was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. This was at the behest of Dominican friar William of Paris, royal confessor and papal inquisitor, although at the time under a cloud for his role in the trial of the Templars.

Often overlooked, Margaret's trial marks the beginning of a campaign of repression of women mystics and apocalyptic preachers by the church and the French crown. In 1317 Pope John XXII cracked down on the Spiritual Franciscans in southern France, deeming them heretical. The next year four were turned over to the secular authorities and burned alive in Marseilles for asserting that the rule of St Francis was the same as Christ's gospel.[145]

Accusations of sorcery, which had loomed large in accusations against the Templars, were a powerful and effective way of discrediting such enemies of the church and state. Long regarded as mere superstition, this was a perceived force whose potency was now increasingly accepted at both the learned and popular levels. It featured in the vendettas pursued by Philip IV's sons against their enemies, such as those against royal counsellors such as Enguerran of Marigny and Peter of Latilly.

Perhaps some of the most extreme such charges were made in 1316 against Boniface VIII's nephew, Francesco Gaetani, who hoped to become pope. He was denounced at Louis X's court and accused of directing curses and spells against the king, his brother and members of the Colonna family.

After the deaths in 1317 of Louis X and of his posthumous successor the infant John I, similar suspicions fell upon Mahaut countess of Artois. In the same year, Hugh Géraud, bishop of Cahors, was charged with plotting to kill Pope John XXII through sorcery and poisoning, for which Hugh was burned to death. Increasingly fearful of necromancy and convinced of its genuine potency, through a commission of theologians John XXII now equated this perceived practice with heresy, in 1326 empowering the inquisition to stamp out black magic. This was an early and troubling step towards the witch crazes of the early modern period.

Philip IV and Boniface VIII

In 1293 western Christendom was given a remarkable pope in Benedict Gaetani, who took the name of Boniface VIII.[146] He was a brilliant canon lawyer whose work on decretals was of great importance, an excellent administrator whose attempts to quell the disputes of the secular and mendicant clergy were highly practical, and a proud leader of the church, whose celebration of the Jubilee in

1300 was to epitomise the might of the papacy. But he was also a man of hot temper and unbounded arrogance, and this the French had experienced at first hand when he came to Paris on a mission in 1290. This was the only time when he met Philip IV face to face.

Boniface's reign as pope had been preceded by that of an ancient, saintly and highly confused hermit, Peter Morrone, Pope Celestine V, who within a year had brought almost total chaos to his office and his administration, and who had eventually resigned. Boniface found it necessary to keep him in custody and to annul his acts, and when the unfortunate old man carried out a daring escape, was recaptured, and died in captivity, rumours of foul play began to circulate amongst the new pope's enemies.

Amongst these were the Colonna family, one of the most powerful in the papal states, and formerly his enemies. They had given him their full support at the election conclave, but were soon alienated again by his failure to reward them. The spiritual Franciscans, bitterly upset at losing Celestine V, who had been their patron and protector, took a similar line. This opposition probably occasioned Boniface's retreat from his first struggle with Philip IV.

The first round of hostilities broke out over the issue of royal taxation of the French church. Louis IX and Philip III had collaborated with the pope in tapping this ready source of money to finance 'just' wars in defence of their realm, recognised as crusades by the pope. In 1296 both Edward I of England and Philip IV levied subsidies from the church for the war against each other, and without papal permission. Large sums of money were involved, for in France a clerical tenth yielded some £240,000 *tournois*, not significantly less than a capital levy of a hundredth on property would have raised (£315,000).

Boniface VIII, although not inherently hostile to the French king, would not stand for this exploitation of the church, and he issued the bull *Clericis laicos*, addressed to all secular rulers. It began with a quotation from Gratian, with comments upon it: 'That laymen have been very hostile to the clergy, antiquity relates: and it is clearly proved by the experiences of the present time. For not content with what is their own the laity strive for what is forbidden'.[147] No specific references to the English and French kings were made, but they were clearly the target of the bull. The pope forbade any clerical subsidies to be levied without his permission, on pain of excommunication. It was also implied that papal consent would not be given readily.

This may have formed part of a general review of papal finances, but in its context, it proved highly contentious – and was probably intended to be. The southern French clergy, meeting at Narbonne to consider Philip's latest demands, received a copy of the bull and, less subservient than their northern brethren, refused outright to pay. Philip, as well as making written protests, took the highly effective measure of forbidding the export of all bullion from France. This would hit the pope's finances badly, for not only did he rely on French money for much of his income, but he was also dependent on highly complex international banking systems, which would be badly affected.

Boniface took the French king's move as a personal insult, and issued the bull *Ineffabilis amor*, which denounced Philip for allowing himself to be led astray by evil advisers. Various threats, including the king's excommunication, were added. The body of argument was a highly abstract defence of the power of the church.

At the French court hostile propaganda began to circulate, including a dramatic dialogue known as the 'Dispute between a Cleric and a Knight', which denied the pope any jurisdiction in secular matters.[148] Opposition to Boniface was orchestrated in Italy. The two Colonna cardinals and an influential Spiritual Franciscan, Jacopone da Todi, issued manifestos accusing Boniface of heresy, simony, trickery in his election and the murder of Celestine V. They demanded a general council to discuss the whole question, and they also negotiated with Peter Flotte, who was on his way to the papal curia.

At this stage Boniface was at the start of a major struggle with the Colonna, and perhaps realised the danger of allowing them to combine with the French against him. Certainly, when Flotte arrived at Boniface's court he found the pope ready to negotiate. Boniface showed himself prepared to rescind any excommunication of Philip and to canonise Louis IX, and in the bull *Etsi de statu* he conceded that kings might tax their national churches without papal consent in time of urgent necessity. The French king's victory had been won with relative ease.

Relations between the pope and the French king now improved markedly, and from 1297 until 1301 Philip and Boniface were in a strong and stable political and military alliance, with the pope attempting to reconcile the French and English kings. The Jubilee of 1300 attracted very large numbers of visitors to Rome, including a substantial proportion from France.[149] At the same time the pope crushed the Colonna in Italy and built himself up into a powerful position, so that when hostilities resumed he was ready to fight Philip again.

It was the king and his advisers who initiated the second stage of the conflict, motivated by a desire to tighten their control on the French church and to swing opinion in France behind the crown and against foreign powers, epitomised by the papacy. It was now too that there first appeared claims that it was the king rather than the pope who was God's representative in France, on whom the salvation of the kingdom depended: the corollary was that traitors were portrayed as heretics.[150] This powerful idea, which was to be deployed in subsequent disputes with Boniface VIII and in the trial of the Templars, arose from the case of Bernard Saisset, bishop of Pamiers.

In 1301 Boniface received a letter from Philip demanding that he should degrade Saisset from holy orders. This unruly and turbulent former protégé of the pope had been tried by a French assembly and accused of trying to stir up Languedoc against the king, and of speaking treasonably of Philip, his advisers and their policies. Lurid, scandalous and obscene charges, almost certainly concocted by Nogaret, had been added, resulting in the conviction of Saisset as a heretic and a traitor. He would however have to be degraded to the status of a layman before he could be punished. The pope utterly denied the right of the king to try a bishop, for according to canon law this was a papal prerogative. He summoned Saisset to

Rome, demanded that his temporalities, seized by the king, be restored, and called the French clergy to Italy for a synod to consider and reform the abuses committed by the French king and his counsellors.

In the bull *Ausculta fili* Boniface moreover accused the king of usurping papal power in the collation of benefices and of unlawfully meting out justice over the church. He also revoked all the privileges granted to Philip since 1297 and forbade taxes to be paid on church goods without his authorisation. This marked a return to the position of *Clericis laicos*, and Philip gathered his forces to return to the fray.

One sentence in *Ausculta fili* reads: 'Let no-one persuade you that you have no superior or that you are not subject to the head of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, for he is fool who so thinks'.[151] This was certainly inflammatory, but the action of Philip's advisers was even more so. The papal bull was burned, and a shortened and garbled version circulated on Flotte's orders.

> Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God to Philip king of the French. Fear God and keep his commandments. We want you to know that you are subject to us in spiritualities and temporalities. The collation of benefices and prebends does not belong to you at all.

Philip's supposed reply, circulated with it, was even more insulting.

> Philip by the grace of God, king of the French, to Boniface who acts as though he were pope, little or no greeting. Let your great fatuity know that in temporalities we are subject to no-one; that the collation of vacant churches and prebends belongs to us by royal right. . . . All those who think otherwise we hold for fools and madmen.[152]

An estates general was summoned to Paris to discuss the matter and garner support for the king, and Flotte delivered an impassioned speech on the theme that the French kingdom was held from God alone. The pope, he said, was trying to suggest that he held temporal as well as spiritual power in France and was summoning the French clergy to Rome in an attempt to realise it. But, he said, it was the king, not the pope, who had cause to complain about the heavy taxation of the French church by the papacy and the placing of foreigners into French benefices. So effective was Flotte's harangue that both the nobles and the burgesses wrote collectively to the college of cardinals denouncing the pope; the text of the nobles' missive survives and is highly vituperative in tone. The university of Paris was not immune from the fray, an intellectual debate over papal power playing out here between the papal supporter James of Viterbo and masters more favourable to the king, notably John Quidort of Paris.[153]

The clergy hesitated, and then sent representatives to the pope himself, bearing letters that begged Boniface to excuse them from attending the council. The pope received them in full splendour, and made a fervent set-piece speech against Philip, complaining about his advisers, regretting that his own words had been misinterpreted

and threatening to depose the king. The cardinals' reply to the French nobles likewise utterly demolished the case that Flotte had constructed, and accused them of misrepresenting both the general tenor and the more detailed points of the papal bulls.

Meanwhile the war in Flanders had reached a climax in Philip's defeat at the battle of Courtrai, at which Peter Flotte was killed. This loss of a key adviser somewhat weakened the French king's position, and when Boniface's synod of French bishops met in Rome 36 out of a possible 78 – although none from the north – were there. The council condemned Flotte, but not his royal master, and nothing of any significance was achieved by the pope, although the king confiscated the goods of the attending bishops in revenge.

Shortly afterwards, however, in November 1302, the pope drew up the celebrated bull *Unam sanctam*, an abstract and learned declaration concerning the ecclesiastical and lay power which caused great fury at the French court.[154] It begins:

> That there is one holy, Catholic and apostolic church, we are bound to believe and to hold, our faith urging us, and this we do firmly believe and simply confess; and that outside this church there is no salvation or remission of sins.

The text continues with an analysis of the relationships of the spiritual and the temporal power, with much use of the Gelasian metaphor of the two swords. The final sentence is the only place where there is doctrinal definition, and this is limited to spiritual affairs alone: 'Therefore we declare, state, define and pronounce that it is altogether necessary for salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff'.[155]

The bull was a general statement about church unity and about the subordination of secular power to ecclesiastical authority, and it reiterated many of the ideas current amongst ecclesiastical theorists since the days of Gregory VII. Only the last sentence was arguably novel, and here the words were borrowed from a treatise of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Why, then, did *Unam sanctam* cause a major furore? One reason was that in its political context it was inflammatory. Another was that in many of its phrases and words it closely echoed the current writings of papal propagandists, known to the French court, and far more extreme than the bull itself. Giles of Rome – a leading theologian at the university of Paris and once the author of an influential manual on the education of princes, written for the young Philip IV – had recently produced a work strongly upholding papal power. This, the *De ecclesiastica potestate* (On ecclesiastical power), claimed that the two powers, temporal and spiritual – the 'two swords' – belong to the pope, although he only wields the spiritual powers directly. Earthly power is legitimate only when sanctioned by ecclesiastical power; the ownership of all property stems ultimately from the church; and all the authority of the church is vested in the pope as successor of St Peter. *Unam sanctam* echoed many of its ideas.[156]

Despite his indignation with *Unam sanctam* Philip IV at first showed himself ready to negotiate with the pope, and this is perhaps a measure of the adverse psychological effects of Courtrai. But Boniface, forgetting the king's past record, tried

not for compromise but for his total submission. This was going too far. The king's new chief adviser, William of Nogaret, seems to have advocated the adoption of a new tactic in the form of a violent and far-reaching attack on Boniface, and action was taken accordingly.

First, at a council of barons and bishops, and later at a larger assembly, Philip's counsellors denounced the pope, and then circulated propaganda in full support of their claims. Boniface was a heretic, a simonist, and no true pope. He sought not to gain but to lose souls. Lurid, obscene and fantastical allegations were made against him, many of which were to reappear in the trial of the Templars: Boniface had a private demon as an adviser, and he had silver images of himself erected in churches; he was guilty of the crime of sodomy. He had said 'that he would rather be a dog or an ass or any brute animal than a Frenchman, which he would not have said if he believed that a Frenchman had an immortal soul'.[157]

Demands were made for an assembly of the church to try to depose the pope and William of Nogaret travelled to Italy to threaten him. Boniface had meanwhile rallied all the support he could find in Italy, and retreated to Anagni. Here he was preparing to excommunicate Philip IV when Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna arrived at the head of an armed band to settle the matter by force. They broke into the papal palace, where the pope received them calmly; some accounts suggest that he was sitting on the papal throne, clad in full regalia, and holding a crucifix.

Nogaret and Colonna insulted him and possibly laid violent hands on him, but having taken him prisoner they could not agree on what course to adopt next, and the citizens of Anagni came to his rescue and drove them out. The shock proved too much for Boniface, however, and shortly afterwards he died. The incident greatly horrified many contemporaries, and Boniface was compared by an English chronicler with Saint Thomas Becket the martyr.

The French king had in reality defeated the papacy, and showed himself unrepentant. The next short-lived pope, Benedict XI, negotiated with the king whilst demanding punishment for Nogaret, but Clement V, his successor, capitulated completely. He restored all the privileges of the French king, he suppressed the Templars at his demand, and he was even compelled to try Boniface posthumously. On this issue he did not concede complete defeat, since he refused to pass sentence, but he commended Philip the Fair on his zeal in bringing the charges, and he erased all the acts of Boniface deemed hostile to the French king from the papal registers. Still, he canonised Celestine V, but in his private capacity, not as pope, and Boniface was not removed from office posthumously. But this was a hollow victory for his successors. For, although they were to rebuild much of the authority and the administrative machinery of the papacy, Boniface, in his overconfidence, and Clement V, in his weakness, had lost the papacy much prestige and moral authority.

The suppression of the Templars

The Templars were a large, exceedingly wealthy and influential group of religious, who had long been closely involved in the politics and financial affairs of many

western states. Their suppression by Pope Clement V in 1312, in the wake of the defeat of the papacy by Philip IV, was to send shock waves across the western church. The rationale for what has often seemed a vendetta by the king and his advisers has proved a lively source of historical and popular debate, attracting implausible pseudo-historical theories as well as serious scholarship.

It was long thought that the collapse of the crusader states in the later thirteenth century, and in particular the fall of Acre in 1291, had removed much of the justification for the existence of the Templars, thus giving some credence to the need for their suppression (although this would equally have held true of the Hospitallers, who were not suppressed). But whilst crusading fervour was abating there was still a strong and continuing interest in recapturing the Holy Land, in France and elsewhere, and the Templars were continuing to attract recruits to their order in the early fourteenth century. Nor is there any real evidence that in 1307 the Templars were any the less fervent in their observance than they had been over the previous century, or that they were less fervent than the Hospitallers.[158]

The real reasons for suppressing the Templars seem to have been, first, the need of Philip IV and his advisers for money and, second, the king's own strongly-held belief in the charges against the order, a belief that was probably fuelled by his advisers. King James of Aragon certainly thought so: in 1307 he told Pope Clement V that he suspected the royal counsellors of deceiving a credulous king. Using their skills of intimidation and propaganda they conjured up damning evidence against the order and on the French king's behalf forced Pope Clement V, a pliable figure, into its outright suppression.[159]

In September 1307 secret orders were sent to the royal *baillis* and *sénéschaux* ordering them to arrest all the members of the order throughout the kingdom and to seize their lands and goods. The reason stated was that Philip had conferred with the pope and the chief inquisitor of France on the matter of the grave accusations levelled against the Templars and, because these were so horrifying, it had been decided to make a full investigation in defence of the faith.

The arrests, which took place in October, had the full appearance of legality, but it seems that Pope Clement V was almost entirely ignorant of French plans, and was highly indignant at what had been done. Furthermore, the papal inquisitor, the Dominican William of Paris, was the king's highly trusted former confessor and privy to his schemes.[160] The weakest part of the king's case was that the arrests were made only on vehement suspicion. It was not long before this was remedied by 'evidence' extracted from the Templars by the use of torture, starvation and physical humiliation. The king's men began the interrogation, and then handed the Templars over to the inquisition, which recorded their 'confessions'.

These were highly coloured in content. The order of the Temple was made to look like a heretical sect, indulging in what were then regarded as heretical and highly blasphemous and obscene practices, such as denying Christ and the sacraments, spitting on the cross, idol worship and homosexual practices and rituals. Most of the rank and file tried to reduce their own supposed participation in the rites to that of observation alone, but under extreme duress almost all admitted to some 'evil' practices. The grand

master of the order, Jacques de Molay, and some of the other leaders were forced to 'confess' in public, in front of an assembly of the university. This central showpiece of the investigation was probably carefully stage-managed by William of Nogaret. With such a weight of damning evidence, the days of the order were numbered.

The Templars' 'confessions' were for a long time accepted as well founded. Was there any truth in them?[161] Discipline in many Templar houses was clearly slack, with little having been done by its leaders to reform the order. Moreover, the practice of swearing these monks to secrecy about the induction practices aroused great suspicion. Most of the most lurid accusations were linked with a few individuals. This did not amount to a satanic conspiracy by the whole order, and most serious modern historians believe the charges to have been trumped up by Philip's counsellors, and largely baseless. They were calculated to stir up emotions of fear and hatred at a time when there was a growing belief in witches and demons, and they had many themes and ideas in common with the earlier attacks on Boniface VIII, on Margaret Porete and on Guichard of Troyes. Many of the Templars themselves were later to deny them, and to emphasise that they had been extracted under torture. It is this that appears as the true testimony.

Certainly the English and Aragonese kings both expressed surprise and incredulity when they heard of the charges. Pope Clement V reacted angrily, and wrote to Philip condemning his attacks and depredations on papal subjects, which showed an insulting contempt for the Holy See. It was this attitude on the king's part rather than the substance of the allegations that appeared to concern him, and although the imprisoned Templars hoped throughout the whole process that he would deliver them, his preoccupations appear to have been with papal authority rather than with establishing the facts of the case.

Clement threatened to send cardinals to France to take over the custody of the persons and properties of the order, and he suspended the inquisition in France. The response of Philip the Fair and his counsellors was characteristic. Anonymous propaganda against the pope was circulated widely in the kingdom, and the masters of the university of Paris were called upon for their opinion. Their statement, although very cautious about the powers of the king in this matter, admitted that the Templars' confessions might justify their condemnation. A large estates general met at Tours, and when the accusations were aired again by the king's counsellors in strongly worded speeches the Templars were declared guilty. As the next step, a consistory of clergy and laity was summoned at Poitiers, where the pope was now resident. Plaisians and other royal advisers made orations denouncing the order and threatening the pope, and portraying the king as pure and just.

Despite this pressure the pope refused to condone Philip's actions, maintaining that churchmen must be tried and sentenced in church courts. So the king's advisers brought 72 Templars to Poitiers to confess before the pope. Doubtless they were hand-picked for the task, and tortured, but certainly Clement now showed himself ready to compromise with the king. It was agreed that the Templars themselves should be handed over to the church but that the king should guard them, giving the pope's men free access. Their lands in France should be taken back by

the church and put under administrators, who could, however, be nominated by the king. Ultimately the money raised from their temporalities was to be used for the defence of the Holy Land.

Widening the attack on the Templars beyond the French kingdom, eight commissioners were appointed to inquire into the order as a whole, throughout Europe. The inquisition was also reconstituted in France, and a general council of the church called. Clement's appeasing line may be explained in part by the pressure put on him for Boniface VIII's posthumous trial, a matter potentially exceedingly damaging for the papacy.

Early in 1310 a movement to defend their order began amongst the imprisoned monks, which grew to formidable proportions. The papal commissioners allowed them to present evidence, much of which was highly critical of king and pope, and that denounced the methods used to extract confessions by the royal inquiry. Certain people from outside the order were also permitted to testify in its defence. The proceedings were slow and the king was increasingly displeased with their results, so in the summer of 1310 he ordered the new archbishop of Sens, Philip of Marigny (brother of Enguerran), and his suffragans to act against the supporters of the order. The papal commissioners, whose president, Giles Aicelin, was a member of the royal council, now stood aside, and on the orders of the archbishop of Sens 54 Templars who had defended their order were burned to death. The commissioners protested but the defence of the order collapsed, only a few brothers resisting the pressure from the king's men.

In 1311 the papal council of Vienne met, with representatives from across the western church, but the French delegates were unable to convince the rest of their number of the guilt of the Templars. A vote was proposed by the French, and taken, that the order of the Temple be wound up without any further examination of its members, but it was lost by five or six to one. So at a time when the council was temporarily adjourned Clement V was browbeaten by Philip's men into suppressing the order. The spectre of the posthumous trial of Boniface VIII was probably decisive. In March 1312 the pope issued the bull *Vox in excelso*, which stated that the order of the Temple was being suppressed not as the result of a judicial sentence but because the accusations against it endangered the Christian life and Christian souls. The council, when it reconvened, was angry but impotent.

The ex-Templars were for the most part pensioned off, and sent to other religious houses to end their days. Their leaders, however, were sentenced by the papal representatives to life imprisonment. When in 1314 they appeared in Paris to hear their fate, two, Geoffrey of Charnay, preceptor of Normandy, and Jacques de Molay, the grand master, openly declared their innocence, and that of the order. They affirmed that their confessions had been wrung from them under torture, and that the Templars had followed a holy and righteous rule. At the behest of the presiding cardinals they were immediately burned at the stake, the king himself, while not directly responsible, accruing much credit as the fearless defender and upholder of divine justice.[162]

Most of the Templars' property was transferred to the Hospitallers, but the beneficiaries were compelled to pay vast sums of money before the king would release

it: £260,000 by 1314, more goods and quittances in 1315–16 and a final £50,000 in 1318. The Italian chronicler Giovanni Villani reckoned that the Hospitallers made a large net loss on the transaction, and his summary of this affair, one of the most percipient of contemporary comments, provides a fitting postscript:

> [The king] was moved by his avarice, and made secret arrangements with the pope and caused him to promise to destroy the order of the Templars, laying to their charge many articles of heresy; but it is said that this was more in the hope of extracting great sums of money from them.[163]

The last Capetians and the crusades

The fall of Acre, the final outpost in Palestine of the crusading states, to the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Khalil in 1291 sent a shock-wave throughout Christendom. Yet it did not mark the end of the Western Christian aspirations to regain their holy places. With the leadership of the former Latin states now relocated to Cyprus, and the Hospitallers finally settling in Rhodes, the crusader ethos still had a strong and enduring potency. It also had many champions from the ruling houses of western Europe, from the Plantagenets in England to the Angevins in Naples.

Thus when in 1313 Philip IV took the cross in Paris, and promised to lead a major crusade to Palestine in 1319, he put himself at the head of a movement to which many of his contemporaries, including his sons, were passionately attached and which was bound up with the identity of his dynasty, from Louis VII onwards. Was it the Capetians' continuing commitment to the crusade that inspired their repeated attempts, between 1273 and 1324, to secure election as Holy Roman emperors, since they had come to identify the emperor's title with leadership of the crusade?[164] Certainly the 1313 ceremony, at which the king himself, his two brothers and three sons, and his son-in-law Edward II of England all affirmed their commitment to recapturing the holy places of Christendom, was one of the most magnificent ever staged by the medieval French monarchy, with eight days of feasting and royal ceremonial. In its wake a renewed crusading fever swept across France.

Yet early in his reign Philip IV is said to have declared that Palestine was nothing but trouble. He had refused papal appeals from Nicholas IV to join a crusade, and in 1290 he had demanded to be released from his father's crusading vows on behalf of his kingdom. When ecclesiastical councils across France agreed to fund crusades in the 1290s, these were against Sicily and Aragon, not the Holy Land, reflecting the king's own views.

Philip's interest in a crusade to the Holy Land was it seems aroused only gradually, and began perhaps some 15 years into his reign. Yet the goal of a general passage to Jerusalem nevertheless appears to have become of genuine significance to him in the context of his political theology, supporting the causes of God and of the French monarchy together. In 1302 pronouncements made on the king's behalf began to identify the interests of the French kingdom with Palestine. Thus a sermon issued

at Philip's request after the defeat at Courtrai included the statement that 'he who makes war against the king works against the entire church, against Catholic doctrine, against holiness and justice, and against the Holy Land'.[165] After he emerged victorious from his conflict with Boniface VIII Philip's advisers put forward his claim to his primacy as leader of the crusading movement, on behalf of the French people.

When the king met Pope Clement V in 1305 he agreed to take the cross, although at this stage he would not commit himself to a date. That would come after the suppression of the Templars. The order had been accused in royal propaganda of allowing Acre to fall in 1291, and its dissolution promoted as providing the key to a solution to the Palestine problem. The corollary, as expressed in a memoir written by Nogaret in 1310, was that if the king was to lead the crusade he must be granted lavish funding by a grateful church, which must place the money directly at his disposal. The suppression of the Templars in 1312 made such funding available, and was a prelude to Philip's taking the cross in 1313.

Philip's death the next year did nothing to halt popular fervour for the crusades in his kingdom of France. The *pastoureaux* or shepherds' crusade, a disorderly popular movement that swept dramatically across France in 1320, was in part an expression of the strong enthusiasm of people of all ranks for recovering the holy places. Philip V had a strong enthusiasm for rescuing Armenia and the Holy Land for Christianity, and promoted the crusade as a key element in the ideas he put to ecclesiastical and lay assemblies, as a driver for reconciling dissidents within his kingdom and reforming the administration of the royal finances. But no concerted plan of action for a crusade emerged in his reign.[166]

Equally Charles IV failed to produce any concrete results from the assembly he convened in Paris in 1323 to try to launch a crusade in Armenia. His plans were overambitious, underfunded and opposed by the *chambre des comptes* faction. The idea of a general passage to the Holy Land nevertheless remained alive at court within the *parlement* grouping, and was to be revived by Philip VI of Valois. In 1332 he presented a grand scheme to the pope for a crusade in Palestine, and took the cross the next year. Taxation was raised from the French church but the towns refused to pay, and by 1335 the funds were being diverted to other causes, the king securing his release from his vow in 1336. A substantial and promising scheme had foundered as a result of poor planning and a lack of urgency and commitment at court.

When it came to the early stages of the Hundred Years War Philip VI and his court showed themselves very well able to assemble, equip and deploy an army against their English foes. Their initial lack of success against Edward III's forces was portrayed by the chronicler Villani as God's punishment on the French royal house for deceiving Christendom and for failing to fulfil its crusading vows.

The Avignon papacy

The settlement of the papacy at Avignon in 1309,[167] reflecting the power and the dominance of the French king, was to have great significance for the development

of the church in the later Middle Ages. It was long derided by its critics as a dark time in papal history. They took their cue from Petrarch, a contemporary, who saw Avignon as the Babylon of the West, where the successors of the poor fishermen of Galilee, loaded with treasure and cloaked in rich apparel, had forgotten their origins. Yet it was not a captivity to the extent that its Italian critics suggested, nor did it mark such a radical break with the past as is sometimes supposed.

For from about 1240 until 1303 the popes had spent most of their time in Italy, but it was exceptional for them to reside in Rome; and both Innocent IV (1244–51) and Gregory X (1273–5) had governed the church from Lyons. The relocation of the papal court to Avignon, a city adjoining the papal state of the Comtat Venaissin, just outside the French kingdom, was thus not an entirely unprecedented event, but it was still a clear symptom of the pull of France on the pope and the college of cardinals. The events that led up to Boniface VIII's death in 1303 revealed the extent of the financial and political control which the French king could exercise over the Holy See – but the papacy had also become politically dependent on the French to regain and maintain its lands and position in Italy.

In the late 1260s Charles of Anjou, Louis IX's brother, had set up a powerful kingdom in Naples and Sicily as the pope's champion. Successive popes were in effect his clients, and the number of French cardinals in the *curia* increased, producing factions and disputes. Although Angevin power in Sicily was destroyed in 1282, Charles and his successors continued to exercise a powerful influence over the papal states from their Neapolitan kingdom. The Holy Roman Empire was in disarray, its rulers focussed increasingly on the northern, German, parts of their realm, rather than their northern Italian lands, leaving Pope Celestine V as virtually an Angevin puppet. Charles of Valois was another important papal supporter as a rival claimant to the crown of Aragon.

Thus until the 1290s the French were vital allies of the papacy, ready to further its political schemes, and the *curia* had a strong French party in it. This gave an added bitterness to the disputes of Philip IV and Boniface VIII, and made it difficult for any pope to maintain himself in Italy without French support. Furthermore, after 1303 the papal states were thrown into confusion as the result of Boniface VIII's attacks on the Colonna, who after his death tried to re-establish themselves against Boniface's own family, the Gaetani. Papal authority in central Italy was weak in the extreme.

Nevertheless, the residency of the papacy at Avignon took place initially as a temporary measure. Clement V, a much-respected canon lawyer and archbishop of Bordeaux, was elected pope in 1305 as a compromise candidate.[168] He had taken an independent line in earlier Anglo-French disputes, and it was hoped that he would continue to do so. In fact, once pope, he proved singularly accommodating to the French king, whose business detained him north of the Alps for several years. Clement's own ill health and a strong affection for his native Gascony were other good reasons for staying, and after several years of wandering, in 1309 he made Avignon his centre. Although in many ways an incongruous choice as the heart of the Roman Catholic Church, this city was in the empire

and on the western edge of the Venaissin, the only land in the region held directly by the pope: Avignon itself was held by Charles of Naples and Provence, a papal vassal, and his successors.

Having been faced with the huge challenges of the suppression of the Templars and the council of Vienne, Clement was it seems then ready to return to Italy, but political events in the peninsula made this impossible. The pope saw in emperor Henry VII of Germany a potential counterbalance to Philip IV and offered him support and the prospect of a papal coronation in Rome. Henry invaded Italy in 1310 with the goal of imposing order, and was crowned in Rome by three senior cardinals. But while the city state of Pisa supported him, there was strong opposition led by Florence, compounded by growing hostility from Robert of Naples: the emperor died on campaign against both in 1313. There was no papal champion to help Clement to return and he therefore remained in the north until his own death.

Clement's successor, the combative Pope John XXII, elected in 1316, was a former bishop of Avignon, and it was quite natural for him to plan his return to Italy from here. He made strenuous efforts to involve himself in Italian politics, he tried to set up a client kingdom in Lombardy and he planned to move the *curia* to Bologna, but these schemes merely fomented further discord. He became embroiled in a major dispute with emperor Louis IV, whose title he refused to confirm, and excommunicated him in 1324. Louis invaded Italy in 1327 and had himself crowned both in Milan and Rome, after which he declared the pope deposed. Although Louis was unable to hold his ground, retreating from Rome in 1328, John XXII was still unable to return to Italy and remained in Avignon until his death in 1334. From here he took a strong interest in elections to French bishoprics and like his predecessors appointed French prelates to high-ranking offices at the curia.

The next pope, Jacques Fournier, who took the name of Benedict XII, recognised the need of the *curia* to have a settled centre, even if this was not in Italy. In 1336 he began the construction of a great fortress-like papal palace at Avignon, and in 1339 the papal records were brought here from Assisi. Avignon was purchased from the Angevins in 1348 and was to continue as the papal residence almost continually until 1403. The popes were mainly men from the Languedoc, and although the Italians saw them all as puppets of the French king, only Clement V and Clement VI, former chancellor of Philip VI and pope from 1342–52,[169] appear fully to have justified this view. Most of them strove to establish institutional and administrative legitimacy and credibility, while attempting to bring peace between France and England and to regain political power in Italy. The Rhône valley with its good communications was a highly convenient place from which to operate.

Under the Avignon popes the administrative system of the papal monarchy became highly organised and centralised. John XXII and his chamberlain Gasbert of Laval built up an efficient machinery for collecting, banking and disbursing papal revenues. Surrounded by its great ramparts, Avignon became a prosperous city and

a major cultural centre, thriving on papal patronage. But whilst the western church was provided with a well-run government it was given very little spiritual leadership, and this neglect of its *raison d'être* was to prove an extremely serious defect. Nevertheless, this period of papal history was not an unmitigated failure, and nor was the pontiff as dependent on the French king as might have been anticipated at the time of Philip IV's defeat of Boniface VIII.

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7

EPILOGUE

The succession and the Hundred Years War

The death of Charles IV in 1328 without a male heir heralded the end of the direct Capetian dynasty.[1] In conformity with recently established precedents the magnates of the realm agreed that the throne should pass to a cadet branch of the family, in the person of Philip VI of Valois, grandson of Philip III in the male line. But the last Capetian kings had left several daughters, and although it was agreed that they could not inherit the crown of France they still clearly had some rights in certain royal lands. Joan, daughter of Louis X and Blanche of Burgundy, had been promised the reversion of Champagne should Philip V die without male heirs – as he did.

Then there was the difficulty of the succession to Navarre. Should a daughter of Philip V or of Charles IV become its queen? If a daughter of Philip V was permitted to take it, this might suggest that Charles IV's accession as its king had not been legitimate. Furthermore, in 1318 Joan, daughter of Louis X, had promised that she would renounce Navarre, but does not appear actually to have done so. Her husband Philip of Évreux claimed it on her behalf, and at a great council held in 1328 they were awarded the Pyrenean kingdom. But Philip VI retained Champagne and Brie, and in 1336 the daughters of Philip V and Charles IV were given substantial financial compensation.

The implications of these settlements were considerable. A grandson of Philip III had succeeded to the throne, chosen by the leaders of the people in preference to the daughters of the last Capetians. In the case of a disputed succession the magnates of France could thus still exercise the power to choose one of the claimants to rule, even where this cut across the well-founded legal rights of female claimants (pp. 369–70).[2] Yet the rights of the direct female Capetian descendants in the acquisitions by the crown, Navarre and Champagne, had at the same time been clearly recognised.

There remained the troubling issue of any possible claims by Edward III, king of England, duke of Gascony and count of Ponthieu, on the French throne (pp. 369–370), based on the plausible right of his mother and regent Isabella of France, queen of England, the sister of the three last Capetian kings, to transmit an inheritance which she herself was not able to enjoy. The French magnates elected Philip of Valois in preference, in part because of the recent male inheritance patterns, in part because Edward III was not 'born of the kingdom', and in part because of their hatred for Isabella. But as Philip IV's daughter she arguably had rights upon the French royal domain; and although she did not claim the throne itself, Edward was to do so, on the grounds that he was Charles IV's nearest surviving male relative, as his nephew, whereas Philip VI was merely a cousin.

Yet if Isabella, who never asserted that she was in line for the crown herself, could still transmit a right over it to her son, any sons of the daughters of the last Capetians would also have a claim. In 1332 Joan and Philip of Évreux produced a son, the future King Charles 'the Bad' of Navarre, who was to argue that his claims to France were stronger by far than those of Edward III, and who would play a central and sinister role in the conflicts to come.

Initially the English king left his claims in abeyance, and performed homage to Philip VI, acting as a peer of France – until in 1337 the French king confiscated Gascony. Then Edward, wishing to regain and retain his duchy intact, claimed the whole of the French kingdom as well, turning what had since 1294 been a feudal dispute into a dynastic conflict as well.

The year 1337 marked the start of what has since the early nineteenth century been labelled *la Guerre de Cent Ans* – the Hundred Years War – between France and England. This was to raise the relatively impoverished English king to great heights of power and influence, and for a time to reduce the French king to powerlessness. Its dynastic and feudal elements were compounded by the attempt of the French princes once more to gain their independence and to dominate the monarchy: the later fourteenth century was to be their second golden age.[3]

Capetian kingship: some general perspectives

Between 987 and 1328 the political power, administrative machinery and the resources of the Capetian kings changed and developed almost out of all recognition. The west Frankish ruler, struggling to maintain his position within and against a group of princes, gave way to a French king whose authority inside the kingdom was virtually unchallenged and who held a dominant place in European politics. Since this was the outcome it is all too easy to imagine that it was an inevitable process, and that the careful policies of the early Capetians, the consolidation of the power they had, enabled their successors to adopt more aggressive tactics, and naturally produced the monarchy of Philip IV.

If one simply traces their history as a series of themes – the royal domain, royal administration, relations with the nobles, relations with the church – this can increase such an impression. Such an approach not only disguises the fluctuations in

royal power, but also distorts the impact on royal authority of changes in political, social and economic conditions in France. And it underplays the diversity and complexity of material culture, spiritual and intellectual life and political ideas.

Royal power between 987 and 1328 certainly did not increase steadily in line with a neat mathematical formula. The Capetians suffered a number of setbacks, none more striking than the contraction of many of their practical powers, if not the latent authority of their office, up to the 1040s. Hugh Capet and Robert the Pious adhered firmly to Carolingian traditions of monarchy to offset a diminishing power, but the succession crisis in 1031 dealt royal control a great blow, and revealed its debility both inside the royal principality and within the kingdom at large. At this time political authority rested with the princes in some regions, with counts and castellans in others. The king, in effect rescued by the duke of Normandy, and sustained by the political culture he shared with the great princes of the realm, came through the crisis of the 1030s; yet his authority remained weak.

From about 1050 until 1200 the power of the king increased gradually. This was in part the result of social and legal developments, as the community of the realm became more hierarchical, and feudal obligations better defined and somewhat better observed. Between about 1090 and 1200 the kings themselves, Louis VI, Louis VII and Philip Augustus, made concerted efforts against the castellans in the royal lands, and against the princes. But in the later 1150s Louis VII, whilst having a stronger power base round Paris than his predecessors, seemed eclipsed politically by Henry II, king of England and French territorial prince extraordinary. Of course this is not the whole story, for culturally Paris was the capital of western Europe, but in the mid-twelfth century there was little to show that it would become the political centre as well.

The years *c.*1200–26, when the sculptures of kings from Notre-Dame-de-Paris (Image 7.1) were created, were crucial in the assertion of Capetian authority within the French kingdom, and the events of 1204, when Philip Augustus took Normandy and Anjou from John, were the turning point. Philip and Louis VIII confined English power to the duchy of Gascony (Aquitaine) and tipped the balance between the king and the princes in the king's favour. They added Normandy and part of Languedoc to the royal lands, vastly increasing royal authority and royal resources, and giving the king power bases with outlets to the sea in the north and the south of the kingdom.

These gains were resisted during Louis IX's minority (1226–*c.*1235) but Blanche of Castile, the regent, acted with firmness and determination in the face of what could have become the most dangerous challenge to royal power since the 1030s. By *c.*1235 she had reasserted control within the kingdom. After this Louis IX was able to consolidate the gains of his father and his grandfather, and whilst he was unable to drive the English from the kingdom altogether, his settlement with Henry III in 1259 was a serious attempt to curb and contain the Plantagenet menace.

From about 1240 until 1295 royal power expanded rapidly in France, enhanced significantly by the political astuteness and moral authority of Louis IX, and by his uniting much of the community of the realm behind his crusades in the

IMAGE 7.1 Heads of kings of Judaea originally from the west front of Notre-Dame-de-Paris, before *c.*1230, long equated with the Capetians, and now at the Musée de Cluny, Paris

Photo © E. Hallam

eastern Mediterranean. The extent of the royal domain increased, helped by the fortuitous reversion of apanage grants, and soon overshadowed the remaining independent principalities. In terms of landholding, Henry II of England had looked to be in a similar position a century earlier, but he had not been the king of France, with all the attributes attached to that role.

By the end of the thirteenth century the feudal overlordship of the Capetians was fully established and their sovereign powers extended throughout the kingdom. France was becoming a powerful and relatively unified state. But the crown became involved in ruinously expensive wars which produced severe financial difficulties. From 1295 onwards Philip IV's administrators developed new and wider forms of taxation. Whilst appearing on one level to be a symptom of the further increase of royal control, they also generated strong resistance from the provinces.

The most serious-seeming challenge to the later Capetians came in 1314–15 with the formation of the provincial leagues. But this opposition foundered on its failure to put forward a general and unifying series of grievances and its concentration on local issues. The king, who now held the papacy in tutelage, was able

to buy off this challenge in the short term, but it was a first sign of the struggles between the kings and the regional communities to come.

Between 987 and 1328 the king had preserved his royal powers and attributes, sacral, feudal and sovereign, but their implications, both theoretical and practical, had altered out of all recognition. Where Philip I had been defeated by a castellan in the royal lands and had been obliged to rely on the alliance and co-operation of neighbouring princes in order to wage an effective campaign, Philip IV could call on all the French people to defend their land against enemies and, despite opposition, could successfully levy vast sums of money to finance his wars.

Where Hugh Capet had depended on the support of the northern French bishops for his accession as king, Philip IV held not only the French church, but the papacy itself in an iron grip. Henry I had engendered a profound indifference from chroniclers and contemporaries, but Louis IX was a popular king throughout France and Europe, a saint and a symbol of French aspirations. Yet these changes were far from being inevitable. If one era can be seen as pivotal in the expansion of Capetian power, it is surely the years 1200 to *c.*1235: the second part of the reign of Philip Augustus – whose seal is shown in Image 7.2 – and the work of Blanche of Castile during the minority of Louis IX in preserving and consolidating his gains.

IMAGE 7.2 Great seal of Philip Augustus, 1180

From N. de Wailly, *Eléments de Paléographie*, ii (Paris, 1838), planche C, no. 5 (1180)

Art, culture and religious life in the French kingdom

Seen from a purely political angle the importance of the Capetian kingdom in western Europe was limited until the thirteenth century. But a quite different impression emerges when its contributions to the cultural, artistic, intellectual and religious movements of the time are assessed.[4] To scholars and to poets, to reforming churchmen and monks, to crusaders and to the designers of churches, France – and to many Paris – was the hub of their universe from the early twelfth century onwards. However insignificant its kings, *la douce France* drew people like a magnet. Its resplendent reputation was well deserved, for the French people made a vitally important contribution to almost all of the most significant movements of the Capetian period, and particularly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

In religious affairs the significance of the French contribution is indisputable. A flourishing centre of the religious life, the kingdom produced many of the great monastic orders of the Middle Ages: the Cluniacs, the Cistercians, the Premonstratensians, and later the Dominican friars. In the eleventh century the peace and truce of God emerged in France, an attempt by the church to curb the anarchy and brutality of society. Moreover, the cult of chivalry gave the knight, around whom military tactics revolved, a sanctified role, a code of conduct and a set of ideals to follow.

The nobility and church in France played a key part in the crusades to the extent that the western crusaders were known in Palestine as 'Franks'. Louis VII became the first crusading king and papal champion. He was known as *rex christianissimus* (most Christian king), a title that symbolised and reflected his close ties with the pope and the church. This role his successors were to continue, and from it they derived great prestige and moral authority. The culmination of this French enthusiasm for ecclesiastical affairs and crusading was the reign, and later the canonisation, of Louis IX, the saint-king – who in his turn became a key figure in the political theology of Philip IV. In Louis's name Philip was to humble the papacy and suppress the Templars because in his eyes they stood in the way of the Capetian monarchy, acting on God's behalf.

In cultural and intellectual developments, the French kingdom also exercised a powerful and long-lasting influence, as the monastic centres of learning of the eleventh century gave way to the cathedral schools and then to the universities. For legal and scientific studies, the Midi was of considerable importance, but it was Paris, centre of the study of classical disciplines, of theological and scholastic learning, which dominated the intellectual world of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

In vernacular poetry the troubadours of the south and their northern equivalents, the *trouvères*, were strongly influential from the eleventh century onwards, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there emerged vernacular prose works of the highest quality. Artistically, too, the French kingdom was of key significance. Various regions – Burgundy, Normandy, western France – developed

their own styles of church design and decoration, the twelfth-century pilgrim chapel of Saint-Michel d'Aiguilhe, Haute-Loire (Image 7.3), being a famed example from the Le Puy region, and from the Île-de-France came the Gothic style of architecture and sculpture, which emerged in buildings from Suger's Saint-Denis to Louis IX's Sainte-Chapelle. Identified as a French style, it continued to be used and copied throughout Europe up to the end of the Capetian period. In the production of stained glass, illuminated manuscripts and other such arts French craftsmen showed themselves inventive and innovative.

In administrative and political developments France was far less precocious than many of her neighbours, and in particular than the English kingdom. But to the cosmopolitan, educated person of the twelfth century, such as John of Salisbury, France was the most civilised and desirable place in which to live. The relative

IMAGE 7.3 Pilgrim chapel of Saint-Michel d'Aiguilhe, Haute-Loire

Image © E. Hallam

political weakness of its king did nothing to diminish this impression, but may rather have increased his popularity. During the three and a half centuries of Capetian rule, France and her people thus made a wide and long-lasting contribution to European society as a whole. This, for much of the Capetian period, exceeded by far the significance of the ruling dynasty in the eyes of contemporaries.

Notes

1 See G. Small, *Late Medieval France* (Basingstoke, 2009), esp. 96–7. For further background reading, see the bibliography.
2 D. R. Whaley, 'From *a* Salic Law to *the* Salic Law: the creation and re-creation of the royal succession system of medieval France', in E. Woodacre, L. H. S. Dean, C. Jones, Z. Rohr and R. Martin, eds, *The Routledge History of Monarchy* (Abingdon, 2019). I am grateful to Dr Whaley for letting me see his text in advance of its publication.
3 A. Curry, *The Hundred Years War*, second edn. (Basingstoke, 2003); A. Curry, 'France and the Hundred Years War, 1337–1453', in D. Potter, ed., *France in the Later Middle Ages 1200–1500* (Oxford, 2002), 90–116.
4 See now S. L. Field and C. Gaposchkin, 'Questioning the Capetians, 1180–1328', *History Compass*, xii (2014), 567–85.

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The sources for Capetian history

Despite its age, the best general account of the sources for Capetian history remains A. Molinier, *Les Sources de l'histoire de France . . .* , ii–iii (Paris, 1902–3), which gives a wide and valuable coverage, though many of the sources it discusses are now available in new editions and translations. Another helpful account is by R. C. van Caenegem and F. L. Ganshof, *Introduction aux sources de l'histoire médiévale*, trans. B. van den Abeele (Turnhout, 1997), a new edition of *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History* (Amsterdam, New York and Oxford, 1978). A still useful analysis of the evidence for Capetian history is contained in R. Fawtier, *The Capetian Kings of France, Monarchy and Nation, 987–1328*, trans. L. Butler and R. J. Adams (London, 1960). See esp. 1–12.

The Archives Nationales and the Bibliothèque Nationale, both in Paris, contain important collections of manuscripts relating to the Capetian period; many of these have been edited, translated and calendared (see below), and many can now be freely viewed online through the Gallica website (gallica.bnf.fr). Many of the local departmental archives (Archives Départementales) also have useful material; and some relevant manuscripts may also be found in the collections at major foreign archives such as the Vatican archives and library at Rome, and the British Library and The National Archives in London.

A wealth of printed sources is available. Useful collections of chronicles, letters, etc., appear in *Recueil des historiens des Gaulles et de la France* (*RHF*), 24 vols (Paris, 1737–1904); in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (Hanover, etc., 1826–); in J. P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Latinae . . . .Cursus Completus* (*PL*), 221 vols (Paris, 1844–55); in the Rolls Series (*RS*), 245 vols (London, 1858–91); and, with French translation, in the ongoing *Sources d'histoire médiévale* series, published by the IRHT. There is also the important series published by the Ministère de 1'instruction publique: *Collection des documents inédits sur l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1835–).

The acts of most of the Capetians have been edited in the series *Chartes et Diplômes relatifs à l'histoire de France*, most recently those of Philippe Auguste, as *Recueil des actes de Philippe Auguste, roi de France*, ed. M. Nortier, under the direction of J. Favier, volume vi (Paris, 2005). Those published before 1960 are listed in Fawtier, *Capetian Kings*, 7–9.

The TELMA website, run by the CNRS, provides an invaluable portal to a number of electronic editions and catalogues (www.cn-telma.fr). Older paper editions retain their value, however: see, for instance, A. Teulet and others, eds, *Layettes du Trésor des Chartes*, 5 vols (Paris, 1863–1909); R. Fawtier and J. Guérout, eds, *Registres du Trésor des Chartes*, 2 vols (Paris, 1954–66). A selection of financial records to 1328 appear in *RHF* and in *RHF, Documents financièrs et administratifs* (Paris, 1899–). See further F. Lot and R. Fawtier, eds, *Le premier budget de la monarchie française* (Paris, 1932) and E. Lalou, *Les comptes sur tablettes de cire de la chambre aux deniers de Philippe III le Hardi et Philippe IV le Bel* (Paris, 1994).

On royal government see E. Boutaric, ed., *Actes du parlement de Paris*, 2 vols (Paris, 1863–7); *Ordonnances des roys de France de la troisième race*, 22 vols (Paris, 1723–1849), and J. Baldwin, ed., *Les registres de Philippe Auguste* (Paris, 1992). On church and state, see O. Pontal, *Les conciles de la France capétienne jusqu'en 1215* (Paris, 1995).

The above list covers only a selection of the range of sources available. Many of the monographs cited below contain comprehensive lists of printed and unprinted sources for individual topics.

Other, non-written sources are extremely important, especially for the period of the early Capetians, from which documentary evidence is scarce. Disciplines such as medieval archaeology, sigillography and numismatics increasingly supplement the written record. See I. Catteddu, *Archéologie médiévale en France: le premier Moyen Age (V^{e}–XI^{e} siècle)* (Paris, 2009) and J. Burnouf, *Archéologie médiévale en France: le second Moyen Age (XII^{e}–XVI^{e} siècle)* (Paris, 2008). The definitive work on Capetian royal seals is M. Dalas-Garriguès, *Corpus des sceaux français du moyen age, tome 2: les sceaux des rois et de regence* (Paris, 1991). On coins, F. Dumas and M. Bompaire, *Numismatique médiévale* (Turnhout, 2000), is very useful.

On art and material culture, two recent exhibition catalogues are particularly recommended for their lavish illustrations: *La France romane au temps des premiers Capétiens (987–1152)* (Paris, 2005), and P.-Y. le Pogam, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 2014). A. Debord, *Aristocratie et pouvoir. Le rôle du château dans la France médiévale* (Paris, 2000) provides a good introduction to castles with plenty of images, while X. Barral I Altet, ed., *Le paysage monumental de la France autour de l'an Mil* (Paris, 1987) is excellent on the built environment in general.

For a wide range of documentary sources from Capetian France in translation, see T. Evergates, *Feudal Society in Medieval France: Documents from the County of Champagne* (Philadelphia, PA, 1993); B. Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State (1050–1300)* (New York, 1964); and M. Zimmerman, ed., *Les sociétés méridionales autour de l'an mil: répertoire des sources et documents commentés* (Paris, 1992).

Many of the relevant literary sources, such as chronicles and royal biographies, are available in English or French translation. Where available, these editions have been cited as references in the notes following each chapter in the text. For further references, see F. Brunhölzl, *Histoire de la littérature latine du Moyen Age, II. De la fin de l'époque carolingienne au milieu du xi^e siècle*, trans. H. Rochais (Turnhout, 1996) and subsequent volumes. For literature in French see G. M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past, The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1993).

Background reading

A good historical atlas is a vital prerequisite for serious study of Capetian France. The classic work is A. Longnon, *Atlas Historique de la France*, i, *Atlas* (Paris, 1885–9). A good recent example is O. Guyotjeannin, *Atlas de l'histoire de France: La France médiévale IX^e–XV^e siècle* (Paris, 2005). Useful reference books include: R. le Jan and M. Le Mené, *Dictionnaire de la France médiévale* (Paris, 2003); W. M. Kibler and G. A. Zinn, eds, *Medieval France, An Encyclopedia* (London and New York, 1995); and A. Vauchez, R. B. Dobson and M. Lapidge, eds, *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, 2 vols (Cambridge, Paris and Rome, 2000).

Fawtier's *Capetian Kings* is still a useful introduction in English to this topic. More up to date are: J. Dunbabin, *France in the Making, 843–1180* (Oxford, 1985, revised edition, 2000); M. Bull, ed., *France in the Central Middle Ages, 900–1200* (Paris, 2002); D. Potter, ed., *France in the Later Middle Ages, 1200–1500* (Oxford, 2003); and J. Bradbury, *Capetians: Kings of France, 987–1328* (London, 2007). For useful historiographical comment see S. L. Field and M. C. Gaposchkin, 'Questioning the Capetians, 1180–1328', *History Compass*, xii (2014), 567–85.

Of recent French publications on the Capetian dynasty, especially recommended are M. Chauvin, ed., *Les Capétiens: Histoire et dictionnaire (987–1328)* (Paris, 1999); D. Barthélemy, *Nouvelle histoire des Capetiens* (Paris, 2012); and C. Gauvarde, *Le temps des Capétiens (X^e–XIV^e siècle)* (Paris, 2013). P. Nora, ed., *Les lieux de mémoire, II. La nation*, i (Paris, 1986) eschews a focus on political history, but nevertheless contains interesting articles by Duby, J. le Goff and B. Guenée. The series *Histoire de France*, ed. J. Cornette, includes two useful volumes, F. Mazel, *Feodalités, 888–1180* (Paris, 2010) and J.-C. Cassard, *L'Age d'or capétien, 1180–1328* (Paris, 2011), both concentrating more on social and cultural than on political history.

On institutions see eds R. Fawtier, F. Lot *et al.*, *Histoire des Institutions Françaises au Moyen Age*, 3 vols (Paris, 1957–62); and O. Guillot, A. Rigaudière and Y. Sassier, *Pouvoir et institutions dans la France médiévale*, 3rd edn (Paris, 2003).

On the church, see D. Iogna-Prat, *La Maison Dieu: une histoire monumentale de l'Eglise au Moyen Age (v. 800–v. 1200)* (Paris, 2006), which is more wide-ranging than its title suggests. The introduction by R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1970), retains its value. The general series *Histoire de l'Église*, eds A. Fliche and V. Martin, contains a number of classic volumes, in particular vii–xiii (Paris, 1945–64).

On French medieval society there is now a vast literature. G. Duby, *Histoire de la France rurale*, i (Paris, 1975), and his *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*, trans. C. Postan (London, 1968) are both classics. More recently, see the wide-ranging J. Baschet, *La civilisation féodale: de l'an mil à la colonisation de l'Amerique* (Paris, 2009).

The *Bibliographie Annuelle de l'histoire de France*, published by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris, 1953–2011) summarised the latest work on French history in general, while the *Bibliographie de l'histoire médiévale en France (1965–1990)*, ed. M. Balard (Paris 1992) had a narrower focus. The best guide to recent research is now to be found at the Ménestrel website (www.menestrel.fr).

Chapter 1. French society in the tenth and eleventh centuries

On the historical geography of France see X. de Planhol and P. Claval, *An Historical Geography of France*, trans. J. Lloyd (Cambridge, 1994), part i. For the historical background, good introductions are: E. James, *The Origins of France: From Clovis to the Capetians, 500–1000* (London, 1982); R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751–987* (London, 1983); and M.-C. Isaïa, *Histoire des Carolingiens, VIII^{e}–X^{e} siècles* (Paris, 2014).

On the French economy, for a general introduction see A. Derville, *L'économie française au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1995); and P. Contamine, *L'économie médievale* (Paris, 2003). R. Fossier, *Enfance de l'Europe, x^{e}–xii^{e} siècles, aspects économiques et sociales* (Paris, 1982) presents a more idiosyncratic analysis.

On the invasions, L. Musset, *Les Invasions, le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (vii^{e}– ix^{e} siècles)*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1971), remains useful, as does P. H. Sawyer, *Kings and Vikings: Scandinavia and Europe, AD 700–1100* (London, 1982). P. Baudin, *Le monde franc et les Vikings, VIII^{e}–X^{e} siècles* (Paris, 2009), is excellent.

On the development of towns, see A. Verhulst, *The Rise of Cities in North-West Europe* (Cambridge, 1999); A. Chédeville, *La Ville en France en Moyen Age* (Paris, 1998); and P. Boucheron, *Histoire de l'Europe urbaine, Tome 2: La ville médievale* (Paris, 2011).

A useful summary of work on the nobility is provided in J. Martindale, 'The French aristocracy in the early Middle Ages: a re-appraisal', *Past and Present*, lxxv (1977), 5–45, reprinted in J. Martindale, *Status, Authority and Regional Power, Aquitaine and France, 9th to 12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1997). A new approach to the nobility has been set out by J. Morsel, *L'aristocratie médiévale* (Paris, 2004). Prosopographical analysis enabled Professor Werner and his followers to develop further the argument for continuity: see K.-F. Werner, *Naissance de la noblesse: L'essor des élites politiques en Europe* (Paris, 1998), and C. Settipani, *La Préhistoire des Capétiens, 481–987, i, Merovingiens, Carolingiens et Robertiens* (Villeneuve-d'Asq, 1993).

The best introduction to rural lordship is now L. Feller, *Paysans et Seigneurs au Moyen Age, VIII^{e}–XV^{e} siècles* (Paris, 2007).

J. Dhondt, *Études sur la naissance des principautés territoriales en France, ix^e–x^e siècle* (Bruges, 1948) was the seminal study on the political disintegration of France and remains useful for its description of the process. Dhondt's thesis that the territorial principalities were created by the usurpation of power has however been challenged, notably by K.-F. Werner in 'La genèse des duchés en France et en Allemagne' in *Vom Frankenreich zur Entfaltung Deutschlands und Frankreichs* (Sigmaringen, 1984), 278–310; for more detail, see K.-F. Werner, *Enquêtes sur les premiers temps du principat francais* (Ostfildern, 2004).

The significance of the erosion of the territorial principalities, overlooked by Dhondt and underestimated by Werner (although arguably outside the scope of the articles just cited) is discussed in much recent writing. See J.-P. Poly and E. Bournazel, *The Feudal Transformation 900–1200*, trans. C. Higgit (New York, 1991); 'The "feudal revolution" debate', *Past and Present*, cxlii (1994), 6–42, clii (1996), 196–223 and clv (1997), 177–225; for an alternative evaluation of how much disintegration there was, see D. Barthélemy, *The Serf, the Knight and the Historian*, trans. G. Edwards (Paris, 2009), though T. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 2008) refines and restates the original case. Fraser McNair's forthcoming work promises to shake up our understanding of this important question.

Since the publication of S. Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford, 1994), essentially an empirical study in support of E. A. R. Brown, 'The tyranny of a construct: feudalism and historians of medieval Europe', *American Historical Review*, lxxix (1974), 1063–88, many historians have avoided the term 'feudalism' and related words. Nevertheless, M. Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon, 2nd edn (London, 1962), serves as a reminder for why it was so influential, and the book still repays reading. F. Ganshof, *Feudalism*, trans. P. Grierson, 3rd edn (London, 1964) is another classic that now shows its age. E. Bournazel and J.-P. Poly, eds, *Les féodalités* (Paris, 1998), vol i, is an interesting attempt to cast the history of feudalism more widely.

On the church and society, the essays in D. Iogna-Prat and J.-C. Picard, eds, *Religion et culture autour de l'an Mil: royaume capétien et Lotharingie*, part i (Paris, 1990) address the role of the church in changing ideas of social hierarchy. An important intervention was made by F. Mazel, 'Pouvoir aristocratique et Église aux X^e–XI^e siècles. Retour sur la « Révolution féodale » dans l'œuvre de Georges Duby', *Médiévales*, liv (2008), 137–152. Also highly recommended are the wide-ranging essays in D. Iogna-Prat *et al.*, eds, *Cluny. Les Moines et la société au premier âge féodal* (Rennes, 2013).

The role of Cluny in lay society has been imaginatively described by B. Rosenwein in *Rhinoceros Bound: Cluny in the Tenth Century* (Philadelphia, PA, 1982) and *To be the Neighbour of Saint Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909–1049* (Ithaca, NY, 1989); these arguments are developed in D. Méhu, *Paix et Communautés autour de l'abbaye de Cluny (X^e–XV^e siècles)* (Lyons, 2001) and I. Rosé, *Construire une société seigneuriale: itinéraire et ecclésiologie de l'abbé Odon de Cluny, fin*

du IX^e^–milieu du X^e^ siècle (Turnhout, 2008). For the early Capetians and Cluny, see A. Sohn, 'Die Kapetinger und das Pariser Priorat Saint-Martin-des-Champs im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert', *Francia*, xxv (1998), 77–121.

While H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'The peace and truce of God in the eleventh century', *Past and Present*, xli (1970), 42–67, remains a useful introduction to the peace and the truce of God, the collected studies in T. Head and R. Landes, eds, *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response in France around the Year 1000* (Ithaca, NY, 1992) give a variety of interpretations of this phenomenon, and also set it in the context of recent historiography on 'the transformation of the year 1000'. A more sceptical, deconstructionist note is sounded by D. Barthélemy, *L'an Mil et la paix de Dieu. La France chrétienne et féodale, 980–1060* (Paris, 1999).

Evidence for popular fears connected with the year 1000 was set out in G. Duby, *L'an Mil* (Paris, 1967, repr. 1980); a riposte was delivered by S. Gouguenheim, *Les fausses terreurs de l'an mil. Attente de la fin des temps ou approfondissement de la foi?* (Paris, 2000). A moderate position is taken by J. Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2014).

On the change of dynasty, the historiography was revitalised by the occurrence in 1987 of the one-thousandth anniversary of the accession of Hugh Capet. The historiographical monument to the 1987 commemoration is a set of volumes organised by the CNRS under the series title, *Colloque Hugues Capet 987–1987: La France de l'an Mil*. The volumes are: P. Riché, C. Heitz and F. Heber-Suffrin, eds, *Xè siècle: recherches nouvelles* (Paris, 1987); X. Barral I Altet, ed., *Le paysage monumental de la France autour de l'an Mil* (Paris, 1987); D. Iogna-Prat and J.-C. Picard, eds, *Religion et culture autour de l'an Mil: royaume capétien et Lotharingie* (Paris, 1990); X. Barral I Altet, D. Iogna-Prat *et al.*, eds, *La Catalogne et la France meridionale autour de l'an Mil* (Barcelona, 1991); M. Parisse and X. Barral I Altet, eds, *Le roi de France et son royaume autour de l'an Mil* (Paris, 1992); M. Parisse, ed., *Atlas de la France autour de l'an Mil*, (Paris, 1994).

Chapter 2. Politics and society: a regional view

On some of the general issues raised in this chapter see: K. F. Werner, 'Kingdom and principality in twelfth-century France', ed. and trans. T. Reuter, *The Medieval Nobility* (Amsterdam, New York and Oxford, 1979), 243–90; E. M. Hallam, 'The king and the princes in eleventh-century France', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, liii (1980); and T. N. Bisson, 'La Terre et les hommes: a programme fulfilled?', *French History*, xiv (2000), 322–15. On the question of 'feudal anarchy' and disorder, see Bisson, *Crisis of the Twelfth Century*. D. Bates, 'West Francia: the northern principalities', and M. Zimmermann, 'Western Francia: the southern principalities', both in T. Reuter, ed., *New Cambridge Medieval History III, 900–1024* (Cambridge, 1999), 398–419 and 420–55 are convenient syntheses of the earlier period.

On castles, see C. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society: Fortresses in England, France and Ireland in the Central Middle Ages* (2004), and publications by Annie Renoux,

such as 'Châteaux, palais et habitats aristocratiques fortifiés et semi-fortifiés', in *30 ans d'archéologie médiévale en France* (2010), 239–56. Michel Bur has consistently emphasised the early castle's disruptive potential, including in his important overview, *Le Château* (1999). An excellent example of a recent case study from north-eastern Francia is *Le Château des Fées de Montcy-Notre-Dame. Archeologie d'un site de l'an mil* (Nancy, 2016). On frontiers, see D. Power, 'Frontiers: terms, concepts and the historians of medieval and early modern Europe', in D. Power and N. Standen, eds, *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700* (London and New York, 1999), 1–12. On princely imitation of kings, see G. Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favour: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY, 1992).

The standard works on the duchy of Burgundy are M. Chaume, *Les origines du duché de Bourgogne*, i (Dijon, 1925) and J. Richard, *Les ducs de Bourgogne et la formation du duché . . .* (Paris, 1954). Steven Robbie's PhD thesis, 'The emergence of regional polities in Burgundy and Alemannia, *c.*888–940: a comparative assessment' (St Andrews, 2012), available online, forcefully challenges previous accounts of the duchy's emergence. For the duchy's later history, J. Richard, 'Châteaux, châtelains et vassaux en Bourgogne aux xi^{e} et xii^{e} siècle', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, iii (1960), 433–47, remains valuable. C. Bouchard, *Sword, Miter and Cloister: Nobility and the Church in Burgundy, 980–1198* (Ithaca, NY, 1987) emphasises the close relationships between the leaders of lay society and the church in this region. On the county of Burgundy (within the Holy Roman Empire) see J.-Y. Marriotte, *Le comté de Bourgogne sous les Hohenstaufen (1156–1208)* (Paris, 1963).

Duby's research on the Mâconnais is summarised in G. Duby, 'The nobility in eleventh- and twelfth-century Mâconnais', in F. L. Cheyette, ed., *Lordship and Community in Medieval Europe* (New York, 1968), 137–55. An important reassessment of Duby's methods (but not a new study of the region) is provided by P. Boucheron and J. Dalerun, eds, *Georges Duby: Portrait de l'historien en ses archives* (Paris, 2015). For regional studies of the counties of Auxerre and Nevers, see Y. Sassier, *Recherches sur le pouvoir comtal en Auxerrois du x^{e} au début du xiii^{e} siècle* (Auxerre, 1980); J. Tanneau, 'Revolution féodale et reorganisation sociale, le Nivernais de l'esclavage au servage, x^{e}–xiii^{e} siècle', *Memoires de la Société Academique du Nivernais*, lxxi (1990–1) 109–34; J. Scott and J. O. Ward, eds and trans., *Hugh of Poitiers: The Vézelay Chronicle* (New York, 1992).

A major and detailed piece of research on the county of Champagne is M. Bur, *La formation du comté de Champagne, v. 950–v. 1150* (Nancy, 1977), now accompanied by his important edition, *Recueil des actes d'Henri le Libéral comte de Champagne, 1152–1181*, 2 vols (Paris, 2009–13). Other work on Blois-Champagne includes K. LoPrete, *Adela of Blois, Countess and Lord (c.1067–1137)* (Dublin, 2007); T. Evergates, *The Aristocracy in the County of Champagne, 1100–1300* (Philadelphia, PA, 2007); and C. West, 'Count Hugh of Troyes and the territorial principality in early twelfth-century western Europe', *English Historical Review*, cxxvii (2012), 523–48. A useful account of Odo II is L. Lex, 'Eudes comte de Blois (997–1037) et Thibaud son frère', *Mémoires de la société academique . . . de l'Aube*, 3rd ser., xxviii

(1891), 197–383, and for Theobald II and his relations with the Capetians, J. A. Truax, 'Politics makes uneasy bedfellows: Henry I and Theobald of Blois', in D. J. Kagay and T. M. Vann, eds, *On the Social Origins of Medieval Institutions . . .* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne, 1998), 273–30.

For a general introduction to the history of Flanders see D. Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders* (London and New York, 1992). E. Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World, 1066–1216* (Cambridge, 2012) is wide-ranging, while D. Defries, 'The Emergence of the Territorial Principality of Flanders', *History Compass*, xi (2013), 619–31 offers an up-to-date historiographical survey. A valuable contemporary source available in recent translation is Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder, Betrayal, and Slaughter of the Glorious Charles, Count of Flanders*, ed. and trans. J. Rider (New Haven, 2013).

Studies on particular regions of Northern France include (from west to east): H. Tanner, *Friends, Families and Allies: Boulogne and Politics in Northern France and England* (Leiden, 2003); J.-F. Nieus, *Un pouvoir comtal entre Flandre et France: Saint Pol, 1000–1300* (Brussels, 2005); R. Jaminon-Boinet, *Le comté de Ponthieu, XIII^e siècle – début du XVI^e siècle: une principauté territoriale entre France, Flandre et Angleterre* (Amiens, 2008); A. Provost, ed., *Les comtes d'Artois et leurs archives: histoire, mémoire et pouvoir au Moyen Âge* (Arras, 2012); A.-M. Helvétius, *Abbayes, évêques et laïques: une politique du pouvoir en Hainault au moyen âge, vii^e–xi^e siècle* (Brussels, 1994); and P. Sabourin, 'Seigneurie, monastère et peuplement aux xi^e et xii^e siècles dans la region Ardennaise: un état de la question', *La revue historique ardennaise*, xxvii (1992), 35–67.

For Picardy, R. Fossier, *La Terre et les hommes en Picardie jusqu'à la fin du xiii^e siècle* (Paris/Louvain, 1965, repr. Amiens, 1987) is a monumental work, as too is W. M. Newman, *Les seigneurs de Nesle en Picardie (xii^e–xiii^e siècle)*, 2 vols (Philadelphia, PA, 1971).

The historiography on Normandy is substantial and ever-expanding. Still the best single work on Normandy before the conquest of England is D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London, 1982). D. Crouch, ed., *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900–1250. Essays for David Bates* (Turnhout, 2011), has many valuable essays. A selection of other useful publications includes: M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984); E. Searle, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840–1066* (Berkeley, CA, 1988); K. Thompson, *Power and Border Lordship in Medieval France: the County of the Perche, 1000–1226* (Woodbridge, 2002); N. Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154* (Rochester, 2005); S. Herrick, *Imagining the Sacred Past: Hagiography and Power in Early Normandy* (Cambridge, MA, 2007); L. Hicks, *Religious Life in Normandy 1050–1300: Space, Gender and Social Pressure* (Woodbridge, 2007); and D. Bates, *The Normans and Empire* (Oxford, 2013).

On the Norman frontier, see D. Power, *The Norman Frontier in the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2004). On the Normans in Italy, see D. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Cambridge, 1992). The annual volumes of the proceedings of the Battle conference on Anglo-Norman Studies (*Anglo-Norman Studies*, 1978–) and the *Haskins Society Journal* (1989–) are a valuable source for the latest research on all aspects of Norman history.

For Brittany, see first M. Jones, 'The Capetians and Brittany', *Historical Research*, lxiii (1990), 1–16, both as an introduction and as a source for further reading. G. Hubert, *Actes des ducs de Bretagne (944–1148)* (Rennes, 2014) is in its core a work of the 1970s but its publication opens up new avenues for research. More detailed studies of particular periods are: M. Jones, *The Creation of Brittany: A Late Medieval State* (London, 1988) (collected studies); J. A. Everard, *Brittany and the Angevins: Province and Empire, 1158–1203* (Cambridge, 2000); and, for background, C. Brett, 'Brittany and the Carolingian Empire: a historical review', *History Compass*, xi (2013), 268–79. English landholding by Bretons, and its significance in Anglo-Norman and Capetian politics, is the subject of several articles by K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, including 'Les Bretons dans l'Angleterre au XII^{e} siècle', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac, eds, *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), 263–80.

On Anjou, for the tenth and eleventh centuries, the standard work is O. Guillot, *Le Comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XI^{e} siècle*, 2 vols (Paris, 1972). For updated perspectives, see now various studies by Thomas Kohl, for instance 'Competing narratives, churches and monasteries in eleventh-century Anjou', in *Acquérir, prélever, contrôler: les ressources en compétition (400–1100)* (Turnhout, 2017), 281–97. For twelfth-century Anjou, see various studies by Kathryn Dutton, for instance 'The personnel of comital administration in Greater Anjou, 1129–1151', *Haskins Society Journal*, xxiii (2014), 125–54. S. D. White, *Custom, Kinship and Gifts to Saints: The "Laudatio Parentum" in Western France, 1050–1150* (Chapel Hill, 1988) is a now classic work on the society and institutions in this region; also important is B. Lemesle, *Conflits et justice au Moyen Âge: normes, loi et résolution des conflits en Anjou aux XI^{e} et XII^{e} siècles* (Paris, 2008).

Regional studies have been published for Vendôme: D. Barthélemy, *La société dans le comté de Vendôme de l'an Mil au xiv^{e} siècle* (Paris, 1993); and for Maine: D. Pichot, *Le Bas-Maine du x^{e} au xiii^{e} siècle: étude d'une société* (Laval, 1995); B. Lemesle, *La société aristocratique dans le Haut-Maine* (Rennes, 1999); and R. Barton, *Lordship in the County of Maine, c. 890–1160* (Woodbridge, 2004).

Since the 1960s there has been a great revival in the historiography of medieval southern society, much of it conveniently and elegantly summarised in L. M. Paterson, *The World of the Troubadours. Medieval Occitan Society, c.1100–c.1300* (Cambridge, 1993), and in F. Cheyette, *Ermengard of Narbonne and the World of the Troubadours* (Cornell, 2004).

The important Oxford DPhil. thesis of Jane Martindale, 'The origins of the Duchy of Aquitaine and the government of the Counts of Poitou (902–1137)' (1964), remains unpublished; however a valuable collection of her studies has been published as *Status, Authority and Regional Power: Aquitaine and France, 9th to 12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1997). The standard work in French remains A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 778–1204*, 2 vols (Paris, 1903). A useful collection of essays is provided by M. Bull and C. Léglu, eds, *The World of Eleanor of Aquitaine: Literature and Society in Southern France Between the Eleventh and Thirteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005). Regional studies include G. T. Beech,

A Rural Society in Medieval France: The Gâtine of Poitou in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries (Baltimore, 1964); A. Debord, *La société laïque dans les pays de la Charente, x^e–xii^e siècle* (Paris, 1984); and G. Devailly, *Le Berry du x^e siècle jusqu'au milieu du xii^e siècle . . .* (Paris, 1973).

For the county of Toulouse, see G. Pradalié, 'Les comtes de Toulouse et l'Aquitaine (IX^e–XII^e siècles)', *Annales du midi*, cxvii (2005), 5–24; and for a fuller study, L. Macé, *Les Comtes de Toulouse et leur entourage, XII^e–XIII^e siècles. Rivalités, alliances et jeux de pouvoir* (Toulouse, 2000).

Three major monographs on southern society, all of enduring value, are: E. Magnou-Nortier, *La Société laïque et 1'église dans la province ecclésiastique de Narbonne* (Toulouse, 1974); J.-P. Poly, *La Provence et la société féodale (879–1166)* (Paris, 1976); and P. Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du x^e à la fin du xi^e siècle*, 2 vols (Toulouse, 1975–6). More recent works include J. Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled in Frontier Catalonia, 880–1010: Pathways of Power* (Woodbridge, 2010); H. Débax, *Féodalité languedocienne: XI^e–XII^e siècles: serments, hommages et fiefs dans le Languedoc des Trencavel* (Toulouse, 2003); and F. Mazel, *La noblesse et l'Église en Provence, fin X^e–début XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 2002).

Further regional studies, on the interior of the Languedoc, include J. Bousquet, *Le Rouergue au premier Moyen Âge, vers 800–vers 1250 …*, vol. ii (Rodez, 1994) and C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges (Velay, Gevaudan) du viii^e au xi^e siècle …* (Le Puy-en-Velay, 1987). A good selection of essays is O. Bruand, ed., *Châteaux, églises et seigneurs en Auvergne au X^e siècle. Lieux de pouvoir et formes d'encadrement* (Clermont-Ferrand, 2015). On the controversial question of heresy in Languedoc, M. Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (New York, 2008) and R. I. Moore, *The War on Heresy* (London, 2012) represent the sceptical side in the debate; an alternative perspective, along with a set of sources in translation, is provided by J. Arnold and P. Biller, *Heresy and Inquisition in France, 1200–1300* (Manchester, 2016).

It will be seen that there is still considerable scope for further research in French regional history. Many of the general works cited above contain useful bibliographies, as does J. Dunbabin, *France in the Making, 843–1180*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2000) and M. Bull, *France in the Central Middle Ages, 900–1200* (Paris, 2002).

Chapter 3. The early Capetians, 987–1108

On the similarities between the king and the princes see the relevant works cited in the footnotes and bibliography for Chapter 2, above. On the cult of kingship see R. A. Jackson, ed., *Ordines Coronationis Franciae. Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, vol. i (Philadelphia, PA, 1995); and E. A. R. Brown, *Franks, Burgundians and Aquitanians and the Royal Coronation Ceremony in France* (Philadelphia, PA, 1992); also *Le Sacre des Rois. Actes du Colloque international …, Reims 1975* (Paris, 1985); and J. le Goff, 'Aspects religieux et sacré de la monarchie française du x^e au xiii^e siècle', in *Pouvoirs et libertés au temps des premiers Capétiens*.

On the healing powers of the early Capetians, the classic work remains M. Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges: étude sur le caractère surnaturel attribué a la puissance royale particulièrement en France et en Angleterre* (Paris, 1924, 2nd edn with preface by J. le Goff, Paris, 1983), published in translation, but not revised, as *The Royal Touch. Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J. E. Anderson (London, 1973). Bloch's conclusions should nevertheless be read in the light of revisions by F. Barlow, 'The King's Evil', *English Historical Review*, xcv (1980) 3–27, and J. le Goff, 'La genèse du miracle royale', in H. Atsma and A. Burguière, eds, *Marc Bloch aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1990), 147–56.

F. Behrends, 'Kingship and feudalism according to Fulbert of Chartres', *Medieval Studies*, xxv (1963), 93–9; A. W. Lewis, 'Anticipatory association of the heir in early Capetian France', *American Historical Review*, lxxxiii (1978), 906–27; and *idem*, *Royal Succession in Capetian France: Studies on Familial Order and the State* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1981) are also useful. Background is provided by J. Glenn, *Politics and History in the Tenth Century: the Work and World of Richer of Reims* (Cambridge, 2004), based on the chronicle by Richer now available in English translation by J. Lake, *Richer of Saint-Remi: Histories*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA, 2011–12); see also Y. Sassier, '"La royauté ne s'acquiert pas par droit héréditaire". Réflexion sur la structure du discours attribué à Adalbéron de Reims en faveur de l'élection de Hugues Capet', in C. Péneau, ed., *Elections et pouvoirs politiques du VII^e au XVII^e siècle* (Pompignac près Bordeaux, 2008). On Capetian reception of ideas about Charlemagne, see M. Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford, 2011).

J. F. Lemarignier, *Le Gouvernement royal aux premiers temps Capétiens* (Paris, 1965), a study of royal government, remains essential reading; see also his 'Autour de la royauté française du ix^e au xiii^e siècles', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole de Chartes*, cxiii (1956), 5–36. W. M. Newman's *The Kings, the Court and the Royal Power in France in the Eleventh Century* (Toulouse, 1929), is a rather rare but interesting account.

Had Hugh Capet not been the founder of the dynasty, it is unlikely he would have warranted so much attention from historians. Of the several biographies aimed at the general reader, recommended are Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet: Naissance d'une dynastie* (Paris, 1987); and O. Guillot, *Hugues Capet et les premiers capétiens* (Paris, 2002). The series 'Colloque Hugues Capet' (see the bibliography to Chapter 1, above) contains numerous relevant articles. An important recent re-evaluation of Robert the Pious is offered by G. Koziol, 'The conquest of Burgundy, the peace of God, and the diplomas of Robert the Pious', *French Historical Studies*, xxxvii (2014), 173–214.

On Henry I, see E. Ward, 'Anne of Kiev (*c.*1024–*c.*1075) and a reassessment of maternal power in the minority kingship of Philip I of France', *Historical Research*, lxxxix (2016), 435–53; J. Dhondt, 'Quelques aspects du règne d'Henri I^er roi de France', in *Mélanges . . . Louis Halphen* (Paris, 1951); and other articles by the same writer, including 'Une crise du pouvoir capétien, 1032–34', in *Miscellanea . . . J. F. Niermayer* (Groningen, 1967), 137–48, and 'Henri I^er, l'empire et l'Anjou', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, xxv (1947), 87–109. R. Grosse, 'La royauté

des premiers Capétiens: "Un mélange de misère et de grandeur"?', *Le Moyen Age*, cxiv (2008), 255–71 proposes a more positive assessment.

On Philip I, see A. Fliche, *Le Règne de Philippe Ier roi de France (1060–1108)* (Paris, 1912). D. d'Avray, *Dissolving Royal Marriages: A Documentary History, 860–1600* (Cambridge, 2014), explores Philip I's liaison with Bertrada from the sources. A. France-Lanord, 'La tombe de Philippe Ier à Saint-Benoït-sur-Loire', *Archéologie médiévale*, xxii (1992), 367–92 provides a rare account of the king's material remains.

On the royal domain, W. M. Newman, *Le Domaine royale sous les premiers Capétiens (987–1180)* (Paris, 1937) is essential; C.-R. Brühl, *Fodrum, Gistum, Servitium Regis . . .*, 2 vols (Cologne and Graz, 1968) is also useful on royal resources. Magnou-Nortier reinterpreted the evidence for royal resources in favour of the Capetians: see her 'Pouvoir, finances et politique des premiers Capétiens' in *Pouvoirs et libertés au temps des premiers Capétiens*, 125–68; but see the critique of O. Guyotjeannin, 'De la surinterpretation des sources diplomatiques médiévales', *Enquête*, iii (1996), 153–62.

G. Duby, 'The evolution of judicial institutions', in *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. C. Postan (London, 1977), 15–58, is a useful introduction to this subject in English. See also *HIFr.*, ii, *passim*. On the royal principality in this period, there is a helpful section in M. Mollat, ed., *Histoire de l'Ile de France et de Paris* (Toulouse, 1971) and see C. Higounet, *Défrichements et villeneuves du Bassin parisien, xie–xive siècle* (Paris, 1990).

On the royal entourage J. F. Lemarignier, *Le Gouvernement royal aux premiers temps Capétiens* (Paris, 1965) remains essential; see too F. L. Ganshof, 'L'entourage des premiers Capétiens', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, xliv (1968), 263–74. The role of the queen and queen-mother is surveyed in J. Verdon, 'Les veuves des rois de France aux xe et xie siècles', in M. Parisse, ed., *Veuves et veuvage dans le Haut Moyen Age* (Paris, 1993), 187–99.

On the links between the king and the princes, the classics are J. F. Lemarignier, *Recherches sur l'hommage en marche et les frontières féodales* (Lille, 1945); and F. Lot, *Fidèles ou vassaux? Essai sur la nature juridique du lien qui unissait les grands vassaux à la royauté depuis le milieu du ixe jusqu'à la fin du xiie siècle* (Paris, 1904). See also the bibliography to Chapter 2, above. J. Boussard, 'Services féodaux, milices et mercenaires dans les armées en France, aux xe et xie siècles', *Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano sull'alto medioevo*, xv (Spoleto, 1968), 131–68 is important on military service paid to the king, though Barthélemy, *The Serf, the Knight and the Historian* suggests qualifications to the argument.

On the political significance of royal patronage of monasteries, see J. F. Lemarignier, 'Aspects politiques des fondations de collégiales dans le royaume de France au xie siècle', in *La Vita Commune del clero nei secoli XI & XII, La Mendola 1959* (Milan, 1962), i, 19–40; M. Reulos, 'L'abbaye de Sainte-Geneviève sous les premiers Capétiens', in *Media in Francia … Recueil de mélanges offerts à Karl Ferdinand Werner …* (Maulévrier, 1989), 403–8; and Q. Griffith, 'The Capetian kings and St Martin of Tours', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, ix (1987) 83–133.

M. de la Motte Collas, 'Les possessions territoriales de l'abbaye de Saint-Germain-des-Prés du début du ix^{e} siècle au début du xii^{e} siècle', in *Mémorial du xiv^{e} centenaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Germain-des-Prés* (Paris, Bibliothèque de la société d'histoire ecclésiastique de la France, 1959), 49–80, is also valuable.

Among a host of works on the Cluniacs, see N. Hunt, *Cluny under Saint Hugh, 1049–1109* (London, 1967) and the publications on Cluny in the bibliography to Chapter 1, above. For canons regular, M. Parisse, ed., *Les chanoines réguliers: emergence et expansion (XI^{e}–XIII^{e} siècles)* (Saint-Étienne, 2009) is now the best place to start.

For the background to the monastic orders see C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism* (London, 1989). Interest in the papal reforms is increasing: see J.-H. Foulon, *Église et réforme au Moyen Âge. Papauté, milieux réformateurs et ecclésiologie dans les Pays de la Loire au tournant des XI^{e}–XII^{e} siècles* (Brussels, 2008); M. Sot, 'La réforme grégorienne, une introduction', *Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise de France*, xcvi (2010); and M. Fournié, ed., *La réforme 'Gregorienne' dans le Midi, milieu XI^{e}–début XIII^{e}*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, xlviii (Toulouse, 2013). B. Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State (1050–1300)* (New York, 1964) remains convenient.

Chapter 4. The revival of royal power, 1108–1226

On Louis VI's reign, see E. Bournazel, *Louis VI le Gros* (Paris, 2007). The edition of Louis VI's *acta* – J. Dufour, ed., under the direction of R.-H. Bautier, *Recueil des actes de Louis VI, roi de France, 1108–1137*, 4 vols (Paris, 1991–4) – represents a valuable source which makes possible fresh interpretations of this reign. As a preliminary study, see J. Dufour, 'Louis VI, roi de France (1108–1137), à la lumière des actes royaux et des sources narratives', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Academie des Inscriptions* (1990), 456–82.

For Louis VII, M. Pacaut, *Louis VII et son royaume* (Paris, 1967), is an important overview, subsequently supplemented with Y. Sassier, *Louis VII* (Paris, 1991). J. Dunbabin, 'Henry II and Louis VII', in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and N. Vincent (Woodbridge, 2007), 47–62, is also very useful.

On Abbot Suger and his role, see the important L. Grant, *Abbot Suger of St-Denis: Church and State in Early Twelfth-Century France* (London, 1998); and M. Bur, *Suger, abbé de Saint-Denis, régent de France* (Paris, 1991); and the classic study by E. Panofsky, *Abbot Suger and the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis* (Princeton, NJ, 1946). F. Autrand, C. Gauvard and J.-M. Moeglin, eds, *Saint-Denis et la royauté. Études offertes à Bernard Guenée* (Paris, 1999), contains important material. For the debate on the date of the rebuilding of Saint-Denis, see, for example, W. W. Clark and T. G. Waldman, 'Money, stone, liturgy and planning at the royal abbey of Saint-Denis', in R. Bork, W. Clark and A. McGehee, *New Approaches to Medieval Architecture* (Farnham, 2011), 63–75; S. M. Crosby, *The Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis* (New Haven, 1987); and Grant, *Abbot Suger*.

On the character and reign of Philip Augustus, see J. Bradbury, *Philip Augustus, King of France, 1180–1223* (London, 1998); R.-H. Bautier, 'Philippe Auguste:

la personnalité du roi', in R.-H. Bautier, ed., *La France de Philippe Auguste, le temps des mutations* (Paris, 1982), 33–57; J. W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus. Foundations of French Royal Power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1986), *idem*, 'The case of Philip Augustus', *Viator*, xix (1988), 194–207; and J. Flori, *Philippe Auguste: la naissance de l'état monarchique* (Paris, 2002). On a key moment, see J. W. Baldwin and W. Simons, 'The consequences of Bouvines', *French Historical Studies*, xxxvii (2014), 234–69 and G. Duby, *The Legend of Bouvines: War, Religion and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. C. Tihanyi (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1990), now supplemented by D. Barthélemy, *La bataille de Bouvines* (Paris, 2018).

On Louis VIII, G. Sivéry, *Louis VIII, le Lion* (Paris, 1995) is a helpful study. L. Grant, *Blanche of Castile, Queen of France* (New Haven, 2016) is invaluable. Both update the classic C. Petit-Dutaillis, *Étude sur la vie et le règne de Louis VIII* (Paris, 1894). For a popular account with useful literary material see C. Hanley, *Louis: The French Prince who Invaded England* (New Haven, 2016).

On political ideas and the image of monarchy, see A. A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World: Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800–1229* (Ithaca, 2013); Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*; Grant, *Abbot Suger*; J. Krynen, *L'Empire du roi* (Paris, 1993); G. M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: the Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore and London, 1977); *idem*, '"Defense of the realm": evolution of a Capetian propaganda slogan', *Journal of Medieval History*, iii (1977), 115–45; *idem*, *The Chronicle Tradition of Saint-Denis, A Survey* (Brookline, MA, and Leiden, 1978); and the classic P. L. Gerson, ed., *Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis* (New York, 1986).

The significance of queens and queenship has at last emerged into mainstream scholarship. See T. Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Basingstoke, 2013); A. J. Duggan, ed., *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge, 1997); K. Nolan, *Queens in Stone and Silver: The Creation of a Visual Imagery of Queenship in Capetian France* (Basingstoke, 2009); *idem*, ed., *Capetian Women* (Basingstoke, 2003). These all build on the classic article by M. F. Facinger, 'A study of medieval queenship: Capetian France, 987–1237', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, v (1968), 3–47. On Eleanor of Aquitaine see the important R. V. Turner, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: Queen of France, Queen of England* (London, 2009).

On the French economy and society see the relevant sections in M. Bull, ed., *France in the Central Middle Ages 900–1200* (Oxford 2002); D. Potter, ed., *France in the Later Middle Ages, 1200–1500* (Oxford, 2003); D. Power, ed., *The Central Middle Ages, Europe 950–1300* (Oxford, 2006); and T. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 2009). Also A. Derville, 'Naissance du capitalisme', in F. Gasparri, ed., *Le xii^e siècle. Mutations et renouveau en France dans la première moitié du xii^e siècle* (Paris, 1994); H. Dubois, 'L'essor médiévale', in J. Dupaquier, ed., *Histoire de la population française, I, Des origines à la renaissance* (Paris, 1988), 207–66; A. Higounet-Nadal, 'La croissance urbaine', *ibid*., 267–311; Bautier, *La France de Philippe Auguste*; and C. Petit-Dutaillis, *The French Communes in the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Vickers (Oxford, 1978).

On Paris, J. W. Baldwin, *Paris, 1200* (Stanford, 2010) provides a vivid introduction. J. Boussard, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris de . . . 885–86 à la mort de Philippe Auguste* (Paris, 1976), remains a useful and interesting account and P. Lorentz and D. Sandron, *Atlas de Paris au Moyen Age* (Paris, 2006) provides a helpful and well-illustrated overview. On learning, see R. N. Swanson, *The Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Manchester, 1999); and D. Power, ed., *The Central Middle Ages*.

C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism* (London, 1989) and R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1970) remain classic accounts of the religious life. On heresy, see R. I. Moore, *The War on Heresy: Faith and Power in Medieval Europe* (London, 2014); M. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy* (London, 1992); and the sources cited below on the Albigensian Crusade.

For the royal principality and domain, see M. Mollat, ed., *Histoire de l'Ile de France et de Paris* (Toulouse, 1971); and G. Fourquin, *Les Campagnes de la région parisienne à la fin du moyen age* (Paris, 1964). E. Bournazel, *Le Gouvernement Capétien au xii^e siècle, 1108–1180* . . . (Limoges, 1975) is a useful continuation of J. F. Lemarignier, *Le Gouvernement royal aux premiers temps Capétiens* (Paris, 1965), and for Philip Augustus's administration, see Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus*.

On the royal army and castles, see A. Erlande-Brandenburg, 'L'architecture militaire au temps de Philippe Auguste: une nouvelle conception', in Bautier, ed., *La France de Philippe Auguste*, 595–603; P. Contamine, 'L'armée de Philippe Auguste', *ibid.*, 577–93; A. Châtelain, 'Recherche sur les châteaux de Philippe Auguste', *Archéologie médiévale*, xxi (1991), 115–61; L. Grant, *Architecture and Society in Normandy, 1120–1270* (New Haven and London, 2005).

The main works on royal finances are F. Lot and R. Fawtier, eds, *Le premier budget de la monarchie française* (Paris, 1932), analysed by G. Sivéry, *Les Capétiens et l'argent au siècle de Saint Louis* (Paris, 1995), 52–9; Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus*; N. Barratt, 'The revenues of John and Philip Augustus revisited', in S. D. Church, ed., *King John: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1999), 75–99, and further works cited in the footnotes.

There is a wealth of material on the Plantagenet lands, the collapse of Plantagenet power and the relations between the Capetians and the kings of England. For an interesting new study of Plantagenet administration see F. Madeline, *Les Plantagenêts et leur empire* (Paris, 2014). Other important works include J. Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2001); *Henry II: New Interpretations*, eds C. Harper-Bill and N. Vincent (Woodbridge, 2007); R. V. Turner and R. R. Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart, Ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189–99* (London, 2000); and S. D. Church, ed., *King John: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge, 1999).

D. Power, *The Norman Frontier in the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 2004) is a very useful analysis. On the aftermath of the Capetian conquest, see J. Peltzer, 'The slow death of the Angevin Empire', *Historical Research*, lxxxi (2008), 553–84, and F. Neveux, *La Normandie Royale des Capétiens au Valois (xiii^e–xiv^e siècle)* (Rennes, 2005). Further studies are referenced in the footnotes.

On the Capetians and crusading, see J. Naus, *Constructing Kingship: The Capetian Monarchs of France and the Early Crusades* (Manchester, 2016), containing some

interesting new perspectives. On the Second Crusade, J. Phillips, *The Second Crusade, Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven and London), 2007; C. Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London, 2006), 268–303; and J. T. Roche and J. M. Jensen, *The Second Crusade: Holy War on the Periphery of Latin Christendom* (Turnhout, 2015) are all useful.

For the Albigensian crusade, see Pegg, *A Most Holy War*. On the kings and the church, see P. Montaubin, 'Innocent II and Capetian France', in *Pope Innocent II (1130–43): The World vs the City*, eds J. Doran and D. J. Smith (London, 2016), 107–51; *HIFr.*, iii, and the relevant sections of the general monographs cited above. On episcopal elections, see M. Pacaut, *Louis VII et les élections episcopales dans le royaume de France* (Paris, 1957).

Chapter 5. Louis IX: the consolidation of royal power, 1226–70

Some important new editions and translations of the key sources for the king and his reign, and for his canonisation, include *Joinville, Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. and trans. J. Monfrin (Paris, 2010); a good new Penguin Classics English translation is by C. Smith, as *John of Joinville, The Life of Saint Louis*, in *Chronicles of the Crusades* (London, 2008), 137–336; L. F. Field, trans., *The Sanctity of Louis IX: Early Lives of Saint Louis by Geoffrey of Beaulieu and William of Chartres* (Ithaca and London, 2014); and M. C. Gaposchkin and P. B. Katz, *Blessed Louis: The Most Glorious of Kings. Texts Relating to the Cult of Saint Louis of France* (Notre Dame, IN, 2012). Other sources are cited in the footnotes.

The best-known work on Louis IX is J. le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 1996), translated into English by G. E. Gollrad (Notre Dame, IN, 2009). This is both a psychological study of Louis and a deconstruction of his myth. Still important too, and quite different, is J. Richard, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 1983), abridged and translated as *Saint Louis, Crusader King of France*, ed. S. Lloyd, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge and Paris, 1992). W. C. Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade: A Study in Rulership* (Princeton, NJ, 1979) gives an excellent account of Louis's reign from 1244 from the point of view of royal government; and his *Ideology and Royal Power in Medieval France* (Aldershot, 2001) is a valuable collection of essays on many aspects of the reign. L. Carolus-Barré and M. Roche, eds, *Septième centenaire de la mort de Saint Louis* (Paris, 1976) retains its value.

P. Y. le Pogam, ed., *Saint Louis* (Paris, 2014) is an important and splendidly illustrated account of the material culture of his reign, well-complemented by M. Cohen, *The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy: Royal Architecture in 13th-Century Paris* (Cambridge, 2015) and C. Hediger, ed., *La Sainte-Chapelle de Paris: royaume de France ou Jérusalem céleste?* (Turnhout, 2007).

On Louis's character as viewed through the prism of many later sources, M. C. Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 2008), makes a significant and sophisticated contribution; while for the first part of the reign, L. Grant, *Blanche of Castile, Queen*

of France (London, 2016) is invaluable. J. M. Elukin, 'Warrior or Saint? Louis IX's character, and the challenge of the Crusade', in K. L. Jansen, G. Geltner and A. E. Lester, eds, *Center and Periphery: Studies on Power in the Medieval World in Honor of William Chester Jordan* (Leiden, 2013), 182–94, is also important, while E. R. Labande, 'Quelques traits de caractère du roi Saint Louis', *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité*, i (1974), 135–46, remains of value. On the culture and personnel at court, W. C. Jordan, *Men at the Center, Redemptive Governance under Louis IX* (Budapest, 2012), gives vivid vignettes.

L. Grant, *Blanche of Castile, Queen of France* (London, 2016) also provides new and important perspectives on the personality and role of Blanche of Castile, Louis's queen-mother, and on the queen-consort, Margaret of Provence. See also U. Vones-Liebenstein, 'Une femme gardienne du royaume? Régentes en temps de guerre (France-Castille, xiii^{e} siècle)', in P. Contamine and O. Guyotjeannin, eds, *La guerre, la violence et les gens au moyen âge, II, guerre et gens* (Paris, 1996), 9–22, and E. Boutaric, 'Marguerite de Provence, son caractère, son rôle politique', *Revue des questions historiques*, iii (1867), 417–58. On the king's siblings, see S. L. Field, *Isabelle of France: Capetian Sanctity and Franciscan Identity in Thirteenth-Century France* (Notre Dame, IN, 2006); J. Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou: Power, Kingship and State-Making in Thirteenth-Century Europe* (1998) and now G. Chenard, *L'administration d'Alphonse de Poitiers (1241–1271)* (Paris, 2017), which challenges and updates the classic account by E. Boutaric, *Saint Louis et Alphonse de Poitiers* (Paris, 1870).

For the social and economic background, see G. Sivéry, *L'economie du royaume de France au siècle de saint Louis (vers 1180–vers 1315)* (Lille, 1984); M. Aurell, 'Society', and D. Nicholas, 'Economy', in D. Power, ed. *The Central Middle Ages, Europe 950–1300* (Oxford, 2006), 28–90; G. Sivéry, 'Rural society', in D. Abulafia, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History, V, c.1198–c.1300* (Cambridge, 1999), 38–49; S. A. Epstein, 'Urban society', *The New Cambridge Medieval History, V*, 26–37; and K. L. Reyerson, 'Commerce and communications', *The New Cambridge Medieval History, V*, 50–70. On Paris, see P. Lorentz and D. Sandron, *Atlas de Paris au Moyen Age* (Paris, 2006); R. Cazelles, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris de la fin du règne de Philippe Auguste à la mort de Charles V, 1223–1380* (Paris, 1972); and I. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1110–1330* (Cambridge, 2012).

A groundbreaking study of the military history of the thirteenth century is X. Hélary, *L'armée du roi de France: la guerre de Saint Louis á Philippe le Bel* (Paris, 2012). On Louis's crusades, see Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade*; *Crusades: Medieval Worlds in Conflict*, eds T. F. Madden, J. L. Naus and V. Ryan (Burlington, 2010); M. Lower, *The Barons' Crusade. A Call to Arms and Its Consequences* (Philadelphia, PA, 2005); and J. R. Strayer, 'The crusades of Saint Louis', in *A History of the Crusades, ii. The Later Crusades*, eds R. L. Woolff and H. W. Hazard (University Park, PA, 1962). For new perspectives on heresy and the inquisition, see R. I. Moore, *The War on Heresy: Faith and Power in Medieval Europe* (London, 2012), 274–304; Arnold and Biller, *Heresy and Inquisition in France*. M. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy* (London, 1992), remains of value.

On monasticism, G. Melville, *The World of Medieval Monasticism, its History and Forms of Life*, trans. J. Mixson (Collegeville, MN, 2016) is a useful overview, and see C. H. Lawrence, *The Friars: The Impact of the Early Mendicant Movement on Western Society* (London, 1994). W. C. Jordan, *The French Monarchy and the Jews from Philip Augustus to the last Capetians* (Philadelphia, PA, 1989) is an important study of a troubled relationship.

On government and administration, see the general studies of the reign cited above and G. Sivéry, *Les Capétiens et l'argent au siècle de saint Louis: Essai sur l'administration et les finances royales au xiii^e siècle* (Paris, 1995); and the still-useful M. de Wailly, 'Dissertation sur les recettes et les dépenses ordinaires de Saint Louis', *RHF*, xxi, introduction. E. Lalou, ed., *Les comptes sur tablettes de cire de Jean Sarrazin, chambellan de Saint Louis* (Turnhout, 2003) and M. Dejoux, *Les enquêtes de Saint Louis: gouverner et sauver son âme* (Paris, 2014) are important works opening up significant administrative sources, while J. R. Strayer, *The Administration of Normandy under Saint Louis* (Cambridge, MA, 1932) is useful on Norman governance.

C. T. Wood, *The French Apanages and the Capetian Monarchy, 1224–1378*, Harvard Historical Monographs, lxi (Cambridge, MA, 1966), and A. W. Lewis, 'The Capetian apanages and the nature of the French kingdom', *Journal of Medieval History*, ii (1976), 119–34, are still essential reading on the domain and the apanages. On the annexation of Languedoc, see P. Timbal, *Un Conflit d'annexation: 1'application de la coutume de Paris au pays d'Albigeois* (Toulouse, 1950) and J. Given, *State and Society in Medieval Europe: Gwynedd and Languedoc under Outside Rule* (Ithaca, NY, 1990).

On Capetian–Plantagenet relations, see B. Weiler and I. Rowlands, eds, *England and Europe in the Reign of Henry III (1216–1272)* (Aldershot, 2002); J. Peltzer, 'The slow death of the Angevin Empire', *Historical Research*, lxxxi (2008), 553–84; J. P. Trabut-Cussac, *L'administration anglaise en Gascogne sous Henri III et Edouard III, de 1254 à 1307* (Geneva, 1972); M. Wade Labarge, *Gascony, England's First Colony, 1204–1453* (London, 1980); M. Vale, *The Angevin Legacy and the Hundred Years War, 1250–1340* (Oxford, 1990) and the collected studies in *La 'France Anglaise' au Moyen Age. Actes du 111^e Congrès national des sociétés savantes* (Paris, 1988).

On the French kingdom and political thought, see in particular J. Krynen, *L'empire du roi. Idées et croyances politiques en France, xiii^e–xv^e siècle* (Paris, 1993) and C. Jones, *Eclipse of Empire? Perceptions of the Western Empire and its Rulers in Late-Medieval France* (Turnhout, 2007); and the thought-provoking C. Jones, 'Undefined terms: empires and emperors in late medieval French thought', *The Medieval History Journal*, xx (2017), 319–53.

Chapter 6. The last Capetians, 1270–1328

For background see J.-C. Cassard, *L'Âge d'or Capétien, 1180–1328* (Paris, 2012) and G. Small, *Late Medieval France* (Basingstoke, 2009), along with the classic C. V. Langlois, *Saint Louis, Philippe le Bel, les derniers Capétiens directs* (Paris, 1901). J. Dunbabin, 'The political world of France, *c.*1200– *c.*1336', in D. Potter, ed.,

France in the Later Middle Ages, 1200–1500 (Oxford, 2003), 23–46, is also valuable, as is M. Jones, 'The last Capetians and early Valois kings, 1314–1364', in M. Jones, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol VI, c.1300–c.1415* (Cambridge, 2000), 388–421. On individual reigns see the works by C. V. Langlois, *Le règne de Philippe le Hardi* (Paris, 1887); G. Sivéry, *Philippe III le Hardi* (Paris, 2003); J. Favier, *Philippe le Bel*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1998); J. R. Strayer, *The Reign of Philip the Fair* (Princeton, NJ, 1980); and P. Lehugeur, *Histoire de Philippe le Long, roi de France, 1316–22*, 2 vols (Paris, 1897 and 1931). For material culture, see D. Gaborit-Chopin, ed., *L'art au temps des rois maudits: Philippe le Bel et ses fils, 1285–1328* (Paris, 1998).

Philip IV and his councillors have attracted much interest, to the detriment perhaps of his father and his sons. The key study is by J. R. Strayer, cited above. E. Lalou, *Itineraire de Philippe IV le Bel (1285–1314)*, 2 vols, Mémoires de l'academie des inscriptions et belles-letters, xxxvii (Paris, 2007) is invaluable. On Philip's character, see in particular E. A. R. Brown, 'The prince is father of the king: the character and childhood of Philip the Fair of France', *Medieval Studies*, xlix (1987), 282–334, reprinted in *The Monarchy of Capetian France and Royal Ceremonial* (Aldershot, 1991); R.-H. Bautier, 'Diplomatique et histoire politique: ce que la critique diplomatique nous apprend sur la personnalité de Philippe le Bel', *Revue Historique*, cclix (1978), 3–27; J. W. Baldwin *et al.*, '*Persona et gesta*. The image and deeds of the thirteenth-century Capetians', *Viator*, xix (1988), 193–246.

On the royal councillors, see E. A. R. Brown, '*Veritas* à la cour de Philippe le Bel de France', in J. P. Genet, ed., *La Vérité, Vérité et crédibilité: construire la vérité dans le système de communication de l'Occident (xiii^e – xvii^e siècle)* (Paris, 2015), 425–45; *idem*, 'Philip the Fair and his ministers, Guillaume de Nogaret and Enguerran de Marigny', in W. C. Jordan and J. R. Phillips, eds, *The Capetian Century, 1214–1314* (Turnhout, 2017), 185–218; B. Moreau, ed., *Guillaume de Nogaret, Un Languedocien au service de la monarchie capétien* (Nîmes, 2012); J. Favier, *Un Conseiller de Philippe le Bel: Enguerrand de Marigny* (Paris, 1963); J. MacNamara, *Gilles Aycelin, the Servant of Two Masters* (New York, 1973. The emergence of parties at court is covered in R. Cazelles, *La Société politique et la crise de la royauté sous Philippe de Valois* (Paris, 1958).

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For political ideas, C. Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, ed. F. L. Cheyette, trans. S. R. Huston (Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA, and Oxford, 1991); J. Watts, *The Making of Polities: Europe, 1300–1500* (Cambridge, 2009); J. Krynen, *L'empire du roi. Idées et croyances politiques en France, xiii^e–xv^e siècle* (Paris, 1993); J. R. Strayer, 'France: the Holy Land, the chosen people and the most Christian king', in *Medieval Statecraft and the Perspectives of History. Essays by J. R. Strayer*, ed. G. Post (Princeton, NJ, 1971), 300–14; C. Jones, *Eclipse of Empire? Perceptions of the Western Empire and its Rulers in Late-Medieval France* (Turnhout, 2007); and *idem*, 'Historical understanding and the nature of temporal power in the thought of John of Paris', in *John of Paris: Beyond Royal & Papal Power*, ed. C. Jones (Turnhout, 2015), 77–118. See also S. Menache, '"Un peuple qui a sa demeure à part": Boniface VIII et le sentiment nationale français', *Francia*, xii (1984), 193–208; B. Guenée, 'État et nation en France au moyen âge', *Revue Historique*, ccxxxvii (1967), 17–30.

Philip IV and the cult of Louis IX has attracted significant scholarship which furthers our understanding of both Lous himself and of the later Capetians. See M. C. Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 2008); M. C. Gaposchkin and P. B. Katz, *Blessed Louis: The Most Glorious of Kings. Texts Relating to the Cult of Saint Louis of France* (Notre Dame, IN, 2012). Older studies include L. Carolus-Barré, ed., *Le procès de canonisation de Saint Louis (1272–1297): Essai de reconstitution* (Rome, 1995); E. A. R. Brown, *The Monarchy of Capetian France and Royal Ceremonial* (Aldershot, 1991); and E. M. Hallam, 'Philip the Fair and the cult of Saint Louis', *Studies in Church History*, xviii (1982), 201–14.

On assemblies, see C. H. Taylor, 'French assemblies and subsidy in 1321', *Speculum*, xiii (1968), 214–44; T. N. Bisson, *Assemblies and Representation in the Languedoc in the Thirteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 1964); and the works on royal finance cited below. On the reaction of 1314–15 see E. A. R. Brown, 'Reform and resistance to royal authority in fourteenth-century France: the leagues of 1314–1315', in *idem*, *Politics and Institutions in Capetian France* (Aldershot and Brookfield, VT, 1991), no. V, 109–37; A. Artonne, *Le Mouvement de 1314 et les chartes provinciales de 1315* (Paris, 1913); J. le Patourel, 'The king and the princes in fourteenth-century France', in M. Jones, ed., *John le Patourel. Feudal Empires, Norman and Plantagenet* (London, 1984).

On social and economic developments, there are useful works by E. Carpentier and M. le Mené, *La France du xi^e au xv^e siècle, population, société, économie* (Paris, 1996); G. Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*, trans. C. Postan (London, 1968); and E. Perroy, 'Les crises du xiv^e siècle', *Annales*, iv (1949), 167–82. On the important question of the extent of the population of France and of Paris, see *Histoire de la Population Française*, dir. J. Dupâquier, I (Paris, 1988); and the still-important P. Dollinger, 'Le chiffre de la population de Paris au xiv^e siècle: 210,000 ou 80,000 habitants', *Revue Historique*, ccxvi (1956), 35–45.

For Paris more generally, see R. Cazelles, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris de la fin du règne de Philippe Auguste à la mort de Charles V, 1223–1380* (Paris, 1972), 131–40; P. Lorentz

and D. Sandron, *Atlas de Paris au Moyen Age* (Paris, 2006) and W. J. Courtenay, 'The Capetian monarchy and the University of Paris, 1200–1314', *The Capetian Century*, 3–16. Two valuable and perceptive articles which bring the late-Capetian capital to life are E. A. R. Brown and N. F. Regalado, '*La grant feste*: Philip the Fair's celebration of the knighting of his sons in Paris at Pentecost of 1313', in B. A. Hanawalt and K. L. Reyerson, eds, *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis, MN, and London, 1994), 56–86; and C. Jones, 'Connecting the urban environment with political ideas in late Capetian France', in A. Brown and J. Dumolyn, eds, *Medieval Urban Culture, Studies in European Urban History, xlii* (Turnhout, 2017), 139–56.

E. Le Roi Ladurie, *Montaillou: Catholics and Cathars in a French Village, 1294–1324*, trans. B. Bray and N.Titman (London, 2005) is an updated and abridged version of the French original, *Montaillou, village occitan de 1294 à 1324* (Paris, 1975). For subsequent research on this village see E. le Roi Ladurie, A. Brebon and C. Dieulafait, *Autour de Montaillou, un village Occitan* (Castelnaud la Chapelle, 2001). The text is in J. Duvernoy, ed., *Le Registre d'Inquisition de Jacques Fournier, évêque de Pamiers* (1318–25), 3 vols (Toulouse, 1965).

For insight into the inquisitors' methods see *Bernard Gui, The Inquisitor's Guide: A Medieval Manual on Heretics*, ed. and trans. J. Shirley (Welwyn Garden City, 2006); and B. Guenée, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago, IL, 1991).

On royal administration, see E. Lalou, *Itineraire de Philippe IV le Bel (1285–1314)*, 2 vols, Mémoires de l'academie des inscriptions et belles-letters, xxxvii (Paris, 2007); *HIFr.*, ii; J. R. Strayer, *The Reign of Philip the Fair*, op. cit., *idem*, 'Exchequer and parlement under Philip the Fair', *Droit Privé et institutions régionales. Etudes historiques offertes à Jean Yver* (Paris, 1976), 655–62, and *idem*, 'Viscounts and viguiers under Philip the Fair', in *Medieval Statecraft and the Perspectives of History. Essays by J. R. Strayer*, ed. G. Post (Princeton, NJ, 1971), 213–3. F. Neveux, *La Normandie Royale des Capétiens au Valois (xiii^e–xiv^e siècle)* (Rennes, 2005) is useful on this wealthy province.

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On the disputes between Philip IV and Boniface VIII see A. P. Bagliani, *Boniface VIII* (Paris, 2000); C. T. Wood, ed., *Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII*, 2nd edn (New York, 1971); R.-H. Bautier, 'Le jubilé romain de 1300 et l'alliance franco-pontificale au temps de Philippe le Bel et Boniface VIII', *Le Moyen Age*, lxxxvi (1980), 189–216; J. Coste, ed., *Boniface VIII en procès: articles d'accusation et dépositions des témoins (1303–1311)* (Rome, 1995); and the still-important W. Ullmann, 'Boniface VIII and his contemporary scholarship', *Journal of Theological Studies*, xxvii (1976), 73–86.

On heresy trials and political opposition, a flourishing field of study, see A. Friedlander, *The Hammer of the Inquisitors: Brother Bernard Délicieux and the Struggle Against the Inquisition in Fourteenth-Century France* (Leiden, 2000); A. Provost, *Domus Diaboli: Un évêque en procès au temps de Philippe le Bel* (Paris, 2010); S. L. Field, *The Béguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor: the Trials of Margeurite Porete and Guiard of Cressonessart* (Notre Dame, IN, 2012); W. C. Jordan, *Unceasing Strife, Unending Fear: Jacques de Thérines and the Freedom of the Church in the Age of the last Capetians* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford, 2005), 88–92; D. Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans from Protest to Persecution in the Century after St Francis* (University Park, PA, 2001).

The suppression of the Templars likewise continues to attract lively scholarly debate as well as perenially attracting outlandish conspiracy theories. To avoid those, see J. Burgtorf, P. J. Crawford and H. J. Nicholson, eds, *The Debate on the Trial of the Templars (1307–1314)* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2010); M. Barber, 'The trial of the Templars revisited', in H. Nicholson, ed., *The Military Orders, ii: Welfare and Warfare* (Aldershot, 1998), 329–42; J. Riley-Smith, 'Were the Templars guilty?' in S. J. Ridyard, ed., *The Medieval Crusade* (Woodbridge, 2004), 107–24; and the recent E. A. R. Brown, 'Philip the Fair, Clement V, and the end of the Knights Templar', *Viator*, xlvii (2016), 229–92.

N. Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580. From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992) is helpful for setting the ideology of crusading under the last Capetians in a wider context, as are M. Barber, 'The Trial of the Templars revisited', cited above; J. H. Denton, *Philip the Fair and the Ecclesiastical Assemblies of 1294–5* (Philadelphia, PA, 1991); S. Schein, 'Philip IV and the crusade: a reconsideration', *Crusade and Settlement. Papers Presented to R.C. Smail* (London, 1985), 121–6; and C. J. Tyerman, 'Philip V of France, the assemblies of 1319–20 and the crusade', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, lvii (1984),15–34.

Y. Renouard, *The Avignon Papacy, 1305–1403*, trans. D. Bethell (1970) is a useful introduction; more recent are J. Rollo-Koster, *Avignon and its Papacy, 1309–1417* (New York and London, 2015); and J. Favier, *Les Papes d'Avignon* (Paris, 2006).

Chapter 7. Epilogue

Useful publications on the background to the Hundred Years War include G. Small, *Late Medieval France* (Basingstoke, 2009); A. Curry, *The Hundred Years War*, second edn (Basingstoke, 2003); and *idem.*, 'France and the Hundred Years War, 1337–1453', in D. Potter, ed., *France in the Later Middle Ages 1200–1500* (Oxford, 2002), 90–116.

See also M. Vale, *The Origins of the Hundred Years War. The Angevin Legacy, 1250–1340* (Oxford, 1996); C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War. England and France at War, c.1300–c.1450* (Cambridge, 1989); and W. M. Ormrod, 'England, Normandy and the Beginnings of the Hundred Years War, 1259–1360', in D. Bates and A. Curry, eds, *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages* (London and Rio Grande, OH, 1994) at 197–214.

By far the best way to further one's understanding of medieval French history, though, is to experience the material culture of France in person. The sources and images added to this third edition of *Capetian France 987–1328* are intended to provide an introduction and a taster for that.

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Page numbers in italic refer to figures.

Abbreviations used: abss, abbess; abt, abbot; arbp, archbishop; bp, bishop; ct, count; ctss, countess; d., duke; dss, duchess; k., king; ld, lord; p., pope; q., queen; vct, viscount

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